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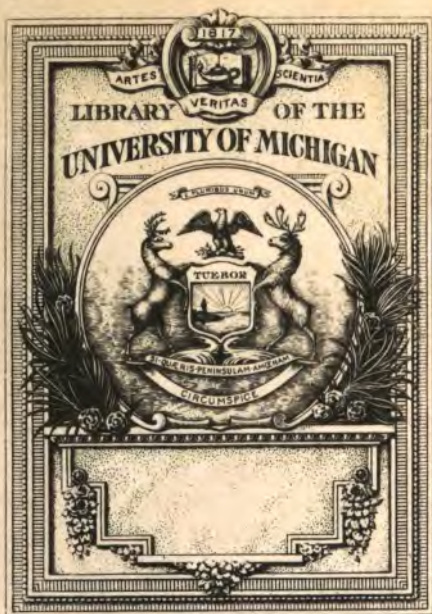
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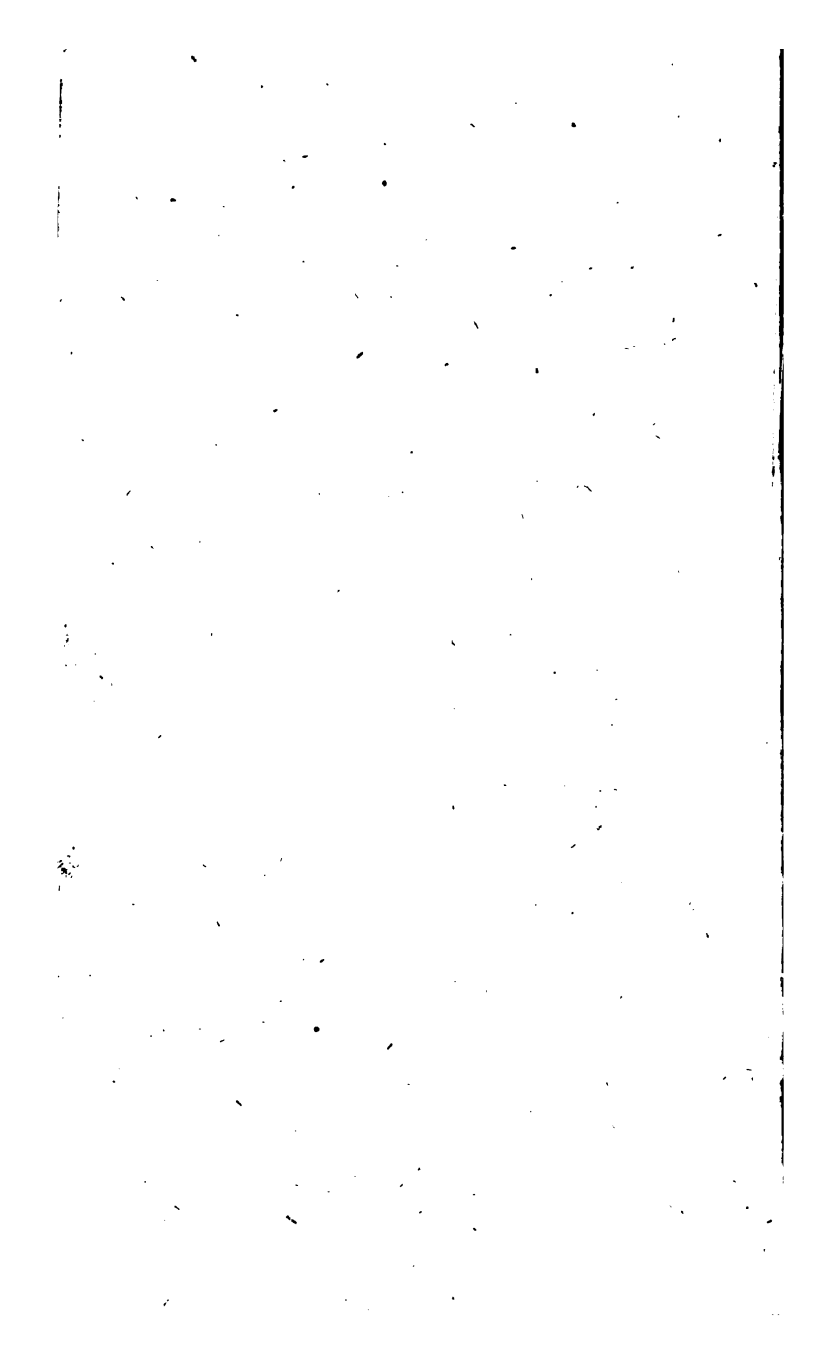
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P I C T U R E
O F
I T A L Y.

Translated from the Original German

*Johann
Wilhelm*

O F

W. DE ARCHENHOLTZ,

Formerly a Captain in the Prussian Service.

By JOSEPH TRAPP, A. M.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.



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TO THE

P U B L I C.

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MULTIFARIOUS are the reasons which induced me to give the English reader a Translation of the present work : but what outweighs every consideration is the Author's liberal and candid way of thinking in retrospect to this nation. Though his "*Picture of England*," lately published, made him incur the charge of being a superficial observer, yet I
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think it incumbent on me to premise, that these sheets, besides the advantage of an original version, will show him in a more advantageous light, and retrieve or rather vindicate, in many respects, his character as a philosophic traveller. I will take it upon me to say, that the observations contained in these volumes are the mature result of a long and reiterate residence in the different Italian States he describes. They are observations of a competency of judgement, which no impartial critic can deny his ingenuity. It must give infinite pleasure to an Englishman to behold here, in a comparative view, the excellence of the British Constitution,

reli-

religion, laws, and other civil and military prerogatives.

On the other hand, I eagerly seize this opportunity to venture some reflections upon a London theatre, composed of a set of Italian adventurers, which has so long and undeservedly met with the highest protection and encouragement. What a pity the British Nobility should degrade their native taste and genius, by giving such undue preference and support, as every liberal mind must either ascribe it to the folly of fashion, or the most ignorant partiality !!!—The so-called “*King’s Theatre*,” where a set of amphibious beings usurp the

empire of immortal Shakespeare, is the place I allude to. Where this national evil springs from either or both of the above-mentioned sources, I invite all fashionable readers, who labour under the predicament, to peruse this work, which, on the subject of theatricals, defines the Italian stage an amusement for the effeminate, who wish to feast their ears upon squalling and empty sounds, and their senses upon indecency and licentiousness. How great is my surprize that no one has hitherto stood up to assert the right of the native Muse, and that her exclusive merit could so long be suffered to be trampled upon !

Ye

Ye Great of the Nation, it is to you I appeal! It is you that let bend your *immortal Bard* under this shameful oppression! It is you I shall never cease to tax with flagrant injustice or ignorant partiality, unless you reform this abuse, do homage to the genius of your country, replace true merit on her long-usurped throne, and leave those intruders to vegetate in the sphere of obscurity.

Far from making the least apology for having thus vented my indignation at your conduct, I shall be proud of your blame in the cause of honest truth. I would, however, have you observe, that, in all other points, I

am the most unbiaſſed admirer of
your brilliant parts, ſuperior accom-
pliſhments, and true humanity.

Having, from this evil alone, ſeen
people of genius pining in diſtreſs,
manufacturers ſlighted, and tradeſ-
men oppreſſed, I cannot forbear
charging you with the cauſe of their
common grievances, and with them
cry aloud—redreſs ! redreſs !

CON-

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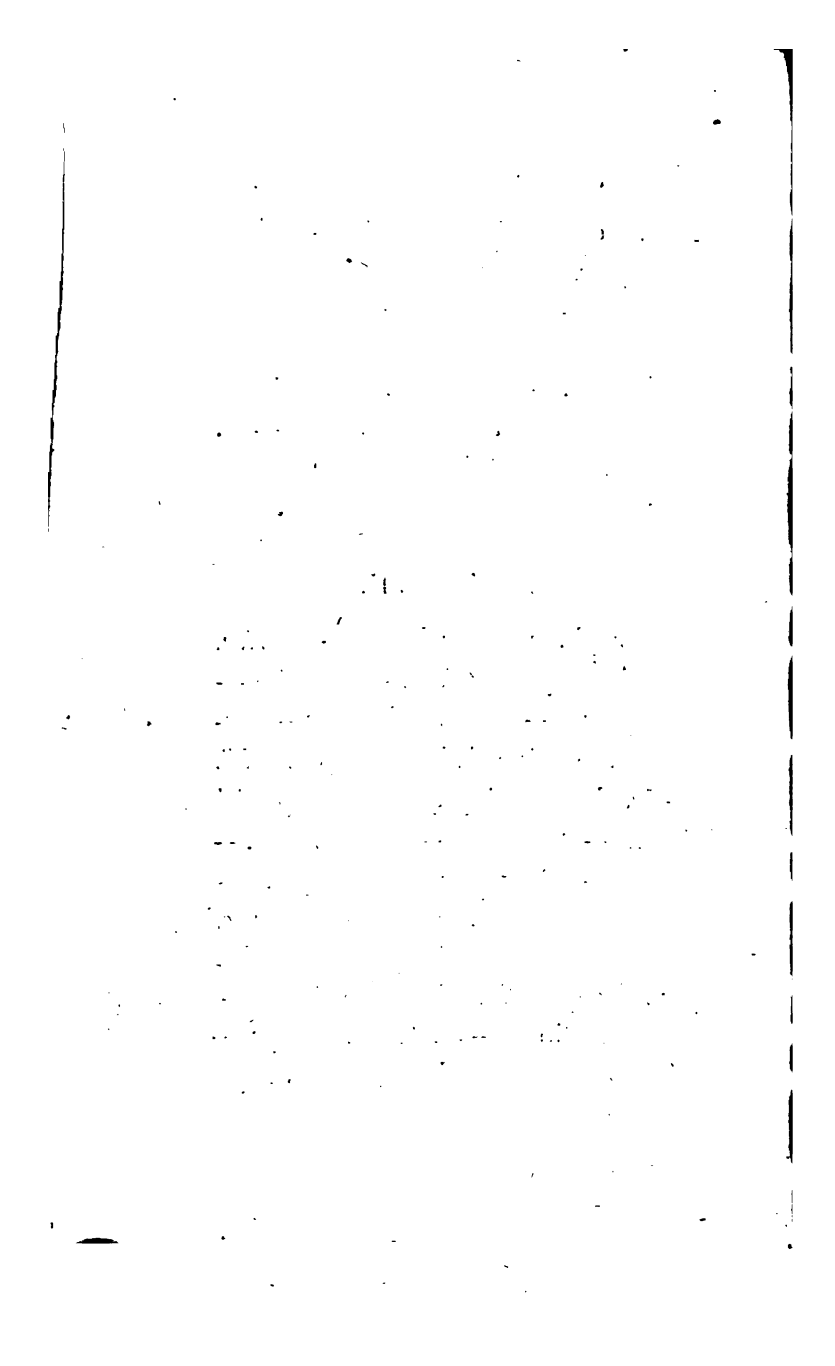
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A

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S E C T. I.

General remarks upon Italy.—Wretched state of its inhabitants.—Politics.—Want of patriotism.—Ignorance.—National odium. Vanity.—Superstitious fear.—Unsocial and inhospitable temper.—Ruling passions of the Italians.—Religious charity.—Poets.—Horses and Mules.—Games; Balloons; Cucagna; Sham-battles; Races and bull-baitings.—State of sciences.—Book-trade.—Poetry.—Eloquence.

NO country on earth furnishes a more evident proof than Italy, how much the difference of government determines

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B.

the

the character of nations. Here climate, religion, and language are all uniform, and this in a country of a moderate extent; but how great is the difference between a Venetian and a Roman, between a Genoese and a Milanese, between a Florentine and a Neapolitan! This difference cannot escape the philosophic traveller: yet a long residence in this country can alone make him acquainted with the peculiarities of character found among the inhabitants of each state, which mostly spring from their peculiar mode of government, and the diversity of laws. So certain it is, that mankind, with or against their consent, will imbibe all those impressions with which their governors chuse to influence them — a truth not attended to by the greatest part of legislators, who seem to doubt its infallibility.

Though Italy has produced many great statesmen, who made deep reflections upon
on

on politics: it has, however, been little conducive to the improvement of the inhabitants. It may rather be said, that, in spite of their magnificent palaces, churches, and galleries of paintings, they rank among the most wretched subjects of modern Europe; because the governments of this country, in other respects so different from each other, seem to have made one tacit covenant, to keep the people in indigence and ignorance; even till this day nothing is more rare among them than wise laws.

Besides the fine arts, no science derives so much its origin from Italy, as that of politics. The great number of the states of this country, their unequal extent, the impossibility of uniting them in one legislative body, made it necessary that the princes for their preservation, should have recourse to artifice and hypocrisy, which, after being universally spread, stu-

died and exercised by great statesmen, were finally honoured with the name of politics. Thus politics took their birth. The French and Spaniards learned them in their wars in Italy, and successfully exercised them against other nations, whose chiefs were not yet initiated in these political mysteries. Politics brought the fine arts in their train from beyond the Alps, they refined our manners, variegated our pleasures; and, in a few generations, all Europe, whose capitals were not much better than large ill-shaped masses of wood, buried in mire, was filled with elegant stone buildings, magnificent churches and palaces. The fine arts transmuted the form of every thing, and even now the beneficent influence is strongly felt.

However ambition and patriotism might actuate the ancient inhabitants of Italy, these characteristic traits are totally obli-

obliterated in the modern Italians; unless we would look upon some ridiculous prejudices they entertain of their country, as an equivalent for that sublime virtue. Oppressive slavery, which pervades almost every province of the land, naturally nips the shoots of ambition, which is rare even among the greatest Italian artists, and absolutely subordinate to the love of gain. Indolence and poverty are the causes of the gross ignorance which is here inseparable from all ranks. Their schools, universities, and academies are a real lampoon upon learning, arts and sciences. Whilst other nations reap the fruits of knowledge, they are but slowly vegetating. This great backwardness is even unknown to their greatest wits, because they are unacquainted with the modern languages, and do not travel. Indeed, of all the great nations of Europe, none travel less than the Italians. To speak in general terms of this country, it

may well be asserted, that neither the nobles, the learned, nor the merchants travel, notwithstanding the great benefit the latter might derive from it, both in knowledge and connections. Their painters and *castratos* pass only from one place of destination to another, and, after a residence of many years, leave it as ignorant as if they had always remained beyond the Alps. The only travellers in the nation are pedlars, and dealers in hatchels, &c. who perform their journies on foot.

The Italians love their country without being patriots. The various forms of government and laws, and the jarring interests among the states of so many unequal provinces, are great obstacles to patriotism, and hinder in some respect its very existence. He that considers how rarely patriotism is found in Germany, the only country in Europe which bears resemblance to Italy in point of its
dis-

dismembered states, will be inclined to derive the want of this virtue among both nations from the self-same source. Though the Italians do not make war among themselves, yet the neighbouring states generally dislike one another, and this dislike degenerates frequently into a marked hatred and contempt. The many members of so imperfect a state look upon themselves as so many nations, whilst such a situation does away every hope of a consistent harmony. The Genoese, Florentines, Neapolitans, and Romans, foster so great an odium against each other, as never was manifested between the English and French. This is not only the case with the people; but even persons of rank and education give vent to their antipathy, and sometimes in a most ungentle manner.

The extravagant and high-conceited notions entertained by the Italians of eve-

ry province, is the source of that odium. Hence their authors mention upon the title of their books, the town or village that gave them birth, however obscure or unimportant, because they think to dignify them by their productions.

Although the Italians be very superstitious, yet they are less haunted by the fear of spectres or evil spirits, than other countries. Their carrying the dead uncovered to the grave is a custom that may well account for it. This usage, excellent in many points of view, annihilates at the same time the puerile dread of corpses, and is an instructive, striking image of the vanity of human life.

To fear the living is nevertheless the character of the modern Italians. Hence their insidiousness, their stabbing with daggers, and disinclination to war. No country in Europe, in regard to situation, is safer against enemies, yet none has
been

been attacked so often, and always with success. Till this hour, nothing is more insignificant than the military force of the Italian States, excepting the troops quartered in the provinces belonging to the house of Austria. I shall expatiate upon this in some other place.

Hospitality is no where less exercised than in Italy. Neglect of the social virtues, extreme parsimony, or rather sordidness in every private expence, makes the Italians disregard this virtue, with many others. Honour obliges them to be civil to a stranger, or, if they have some political design upon him, they think to give the most convincing proof of their esteem, by inviting him to a cup of chocolate. They are utter strangers to tea and coffee-assemblies, those great and pleasing sources of amusement in other countries. Even the best families have their coffee brought from coffee-houses; the cravings

of appetite are satisfied in the same instant, and the whole passes on without admitting the least friendly chat or conversation. Who would suppose that there is not a single public garden in Italy, where people may meet and divert themselves in an innocent manner. No societies, no clubs, no private balls, in short, no social pleasure is to be met with in that country, which in England, and so many other kingdoms, make a perennial fountain of numberless recreations. I pity the man, whom climate and arts, however captivating, can compensate for such wants.

It is a matter of fact, that Italy boasts of men whose mind and heart are equally excellent, but instances of this sort are very rare. Want of knowledge is very apparent here, and the cultivation of mental powers highly unusual.

Besides

Besides this, the Italians are governed by two powerful passions, the common failings of the inhabitants of warmer regions, viz. love and vengeance. It would be very natural to combat from the pulpit this latter passion and its consequences, so detrimental to society, but it makes very seldom the subject of a sermon, because the miracles of the saints are themes of a much sublimer nature, and leave no leisure for moral doctrines.

The spirit of the Roman religion generates a virtue, the effects of which are very perceptible in Italy. The love of one's fellow creatures is practised here to a high degree, and no nation on earth except the English can put themselves, in this point, upon a level with the Italians. With the former it is mere philanthropy, whilst with the latter it makes a precept of religion, and embraces the tenet of the purgatory.

The most inconsiderable town in Italy has several hospitals, but they are very numerous in great cities. I shall speak elsewhere of the hospital for females at Venice, and the vast pilgrim hospital at Rome. The latter may be called the throne of beneficence in Italy. The income of all the Cardinals is said not to amount to a third part of the revenues of the hospitals of Rome.

Magnanimity and philanthropy are the only basis of the laws belonging to those institutions ; they are the indiscriminate receptacles for individuals of every nation and religion, without its being required of them to get previously an order from the minister or some reputable person, as is customary in many countries. The Jews alone are excluded from this advantage ; and in those towns where they are tolerated, they must provide for their own poor and sick, whether natives or foreigners. Should it happen that there

were no room in a hospital, the patient is visited at his dwelling by regular physicians, and supplied gratis with medicines. It must be confessed, that such articles of religion deserve every encomium: articles that afford active relief to suffering mankind, and oblige the rich to let the needy participate of their abundance.

The posts of Italy are still in an infant state. You will find here no stages, no chaises, in general, no conveyances by which effects of value may be transported under the authority of the sovereign. There are no common waggons which pass from ~~one~~ province to another. To remedy this, the great cities of Italy have a number of post-offices belonging to the different princes. At Rome, there are as many as there are petty—or great princes in the land, which naturally creates confusion. This want of posts renders difficult the communication between the various provinces and their inhabitants:

habitants. Of course, very few Italians visit even the adjacent districts, and they are still less disposed to travel into foreign countries, beyond the Alps, unless talents or adventure should stimulate them to go in quest of fortune. Foreigners wishing to travel with œconomy in Italy, should hire a *Vetturino*, a man who drives a covered chaise with two wheels, and goes about six or seven German leagues a day. This sort of men is to be met with in every great town, and the traveller must also make a bargain with him for his victuals; should he neglect to do this, he may depend upon paying the expences of the driver and his horses for the whole journey. In order to effect a tolerable treatment and complaisance on the part of the driver, a gratuity at the end of the journey ought to be promised him, besides the payment agreed upon. This gratuity is given in proportion to his conduct.

To

To the indolence of the natives which marks almost every one of their public proceedings, and binds them, as it were, to their native soil, we must add the want of horses, which prevails throughout Italy except in Naples. They are even seldom used for tillage, and oxen are put to the plough. As beasts of burden the mules are of great service to the Italians. A species of animals which bears great resemblance to the mule, and can hardly be distinguished from it, is called *Gimmera*. This animal is either bred from a stallion and a cow, or a bull and a mare, or from an ass and a cow, and is of high utility especially in the mountainous Cantons.

The Italians love even the very name of gaming. In the variety of their entertainments they discover an inexhaustible invention. But such diversions as require a great display of bodily strength, are left to the lower classes of people. Among those may be reckoned a certain balloon
or

or ball game. A large leather ball, filled with air, is beaten about by twelve persons. This game, called *Pallone*, is usual throughout Italy. It is played for considerable sums, and players from remote places are sometimes invited to it. The Tuscans have a balloon game similar to the above; it bears the name of *Calcio*, and is played not only by twelve but more numerous parties.

. The game of *Cucagna*, of which there are several sorts, is confined to Lombardy, Tuscany, and Naples. They erect lofty trees, whose bark is previously stripped off, and suspend from their highest branches various articles of wearing apparel and victuals, which are deemed the reward of him who can reach them. To render the task more arduous, the tree is sometimes smeared with soap; the continual and sudden falls of the climbers excite the laughter of the spectators, and make the essence of the entertainment.

In

- In another sort of *Cucagna* a cord is extended on high to which the same rewards are fastened, besides whole sheep, ducks, chickens, &c. which the people strive to pull down by leaping.

I have also seen in Florence a race with waggons; dull and insignificant indeed, and what might properly have been deemed a satire upon the ancient Roman chariot race. It was a set of ragged fellows standing upon a country waggon and driving the horses before them; in short, I saw nothing more or less than what the smallest market town exhibits on every market day; boors returning in their empty carts with somewhat more than usual haste. I never saw a more pitiful popular diversion than this, yet it was exhibited upon the great square in Florence.

The peasants of Piedmont in their races yoke oxen to their carts, giving first to the animals as much wine as will make them

them drunk, and afterwards drive them at the hazard of their lives. Frequently the carts overturn, and the drivers either break their necks, or become cripples.

Sham-battles or mock-fights have been till recently, in use through the northern parts of Italy, chiefly at Turin and Pisa. At Turin they were given on holidays before the walls on the banks of the Po. Numbers of the inhabitants divided into parties and flung stones against each other. The combat was so furious as to be followed by a series of fatal accidents: such as were made prisoners had their hair cut off on the spot. The late King of Sardinia put a stop for ever to those battles (*battajola*.) The reigning Grand Duke of Tuscany, now Leopold II. Emperor of Germany, followed his example with regard to the mock-fight upon the bridge of Pisa, where people annually fought during one hour with matchless fury, to take possession of a bridge thrown over

over the river Arno. The combatants appeared here in complete armour, and their heads were covered with helmets; their weapons consisted of strong clubs, with which they fell upon one another and did much execution. Their leaders were cavaliers of the first families, who many days before the combat paraded the streets with colours and music, in order to inflame their parties. This fostered the family hatred between many houses, and created a ferment among all classes of people not much unlike a civil war.

In some provinces of Italy, for instance, in the district of Ancona, bull-baitings are customary, and Corsican dogs let loose upon bulls; the spectators sit in an amphitheatre and coolly view those fine spectacles.

I shall touch upon horse-races, when treating of the Roman carnival; they are not performed with riders, as in England,

land, but the horses run by themselves. I shall observe the same rule with regard to rowing matches, or regattas, on the subject of Venice, and shall have occasion to speak about the religious amusements, which are reserved to entertain the people at large.

It is incontrovertible, that the Italians have been our masters in the arts, but in point of sciences this can only be maintained with great restrictions; for it is well known, that they never made any progress in many branches of literature; even when they were in the most flourishing state, there was an immense distance between the literature of those times, and that of modern England, France, and Germany. Who will compare a Guiccardini and a Machiavel, as historians, with a Robertson, a Hume, a Gibbon, a Raynal? No Italian writer ever attempted to deliver philosophy in a popular
man-

manner; a subject, on which we have so many excellent works.

Imperfect as the state of literature was among the Italians, even this dawn of science did not continue long. In the last century both arts and literature began to decline. The study of the classics was neglected, and the progress of neighbouring nations was thought an object unworthy of their notice. Thus ignorance spread little by little, and in the eighteenth century plunged that fine country into the barbarism of the middle ages. Mathematics, and some branches of natural history are the only sciences cultivated with some success. It would be in vain here, to look for prosaic works, that combine instruction with entertainment, works that teach the philosophy of life, ingenious dissertations upon interesting subjects of the ancient world.— These productions so abundant, I say, amongst

amongst the three most enlightened nations of Europe, would in vain be sought here; they would not find readers. Authorship is yet in its cradle. There is no bookseller of property in the country, except some printers and paper manufacturers, who follow a kind of book trade besides their own; for a real trade in the above line, is, properly speaking, unknown here. Such an occupation is looked upon too insignificant, as to be deemed an essential branch of commerce. The great cities have dealers in books, but they seldom carry their trade beyond the walls of the place they reside in. It may easily be guessed, how little those gentry can encourage writers with ready cash. One florin is usually paid per sheet, and this not only in Calabria, but even in Florence, a city which many consider in a better light.

The fair sex, whose power to form and soften the manners of the men is so great,
can

can operate but little in Italy, on account of various absurd prejudices of decency. As most of the ladies are educated in convents, they lay up so copious a store of superstition, as will last them for life.

Though the Italians are fond of political chat, and testify their interest in every political contingency, they have, however, no interesting works on that head, except those of Machiavel. Few are their translations, as there are no readers. The voyages round the world were, for many years, totally unknown to this ignorant nation. Even among the best company, the politicians and the literati (if you please to call them so) the venerable name of Cook has never been mentioned.*

* This was still the case in 1780. From that time they began to make extracts from the voyages of that celebrated navigator, and to translate them into their language.

The

The great poets of modern Italy, whose names are always in the mouths of their degenerate posterity, cannot kindle the poetic fire among the present poetasters. Their whole art is confined to the sonnet, and they are almost perfect strangers to the idea of a great poem.

Their eloquence deserves as little notice. False images, ill-adapted comparisons, a bad delivery, accompanied with the most violent gestures and grimaces, equal to that of the meanest buffoon, constitute the eloquence of the pulpit and the bar. The orator puts himself in all sorts of postures, makes wry faces, and presents so droll a countenance in general, that a stranger who never saw him before, would think he saw a madman. This extreme violence operates forcibly upon the Italian hearers; it is what he is led to expect; it makes his attention unremitted, whilst the softness and sensibility of a *Sterne* would lull him asleep.

Thus

Thus far my general remarks upon this nation. Hereafter I shall delineate more minutely the characteristic of each state.

S E C T. II.

VENICE.—*Despotic government.—Character of the Venetians.—Description of the Carnival.—Annual Venetian fair.—Insignificant arsenal.—Navy.—Army.—Nobility.—Aristocratic constitution.—Session of the Senate.—Elections.—Doge of Venice.—The Senate humbled by Count Orlov.—Gondoliers.—Girls of pleasure.—Monks.—St. Mark's church.*

THE inhabitant of Venice boasts of living in a republic, and curses the despotism of monarchic states; forgetting that he himself is governed with an iron rod, which would bear much heavier upon him, did not the government take care to dissipate him by amusements.—These amusements, however advantageous to the state, by the concourse of
tra-

travellers, are chiefly calculated for the people. Without similar diversions the Venetian, in spite of his sprightly temper, would be as serious as an Englishman.— He is reserved on every other topic, except that of pleasure. The fear of the state inquisition and its informers fetters his tongue. This dreadful tribunal, which condemns without hearing, is an absolute support of the aristocratic power, meanwhile it affords protection to the citizen against the enormous violence of the nobles.

The severity of that supreme court of justice is now much relaxed, with regard to foreigners. It is thought sufficient to punish their indiscretion with banishment. They are secured by night, and conducted by sbirrs (guards) beyond the frontiers without any farther hearing. After the great decline of trade at Venice, the visits of travellers became the greatest resource of the nation; it was therefore necessary

to adopt milder maxims, in order not to deter them from visiting a country which can by no means do without them.

To make a Venetian happy the proverb requires three things :

“ *La mattina una messetta,*

“ *Lapodisnar una bassetta,*

“ *E la sera una donnetta.*”

(In the morning a short mass, in the afternoon a little party at cards, and at night a comely lass.) These are the genuine outlines of the Venetian character, for there is no nation in the world so fond of gaming as they, yet they do not neglect the rites of the church, in order to keep up the dignity of good Roman Catholics in which they glory, notwithstanding their frequent disagreements with the popes. They express a certain good nature in their words and actions not to be found among the other Italians. Their nobles
affect

affect the same good nature among themselves, but power and authority, the only objects of their pursuit, destroy the shoots of kindness, and steel their hearts against the soft sensations of philanthropy.

In 1774 the Senate issued a proclamation prohibiting all games of hazard.— They were forced to it by the ruin of many noble families, whom this bad habit had reduced to the most abject poverty. As Venice was little visited at the ensuing carnival, it caused such uneasiness, that the recal of the gaming laws was brought on the carpet before the great tribunal of the nation, and the motion was carried by a majority of two votes. The late Emperor visited Venice in 1775, to see the celebrated fair. As this brought together an astonishing number of strangers, the amusements were multiplied, and whilst gaming was forbidden in all other provinces of Italy, this celebrated carnival again resumed

its flattering distinctions of being chiefly visited by foreigners.

Notwithstanding the great praises lavished upon this festival, in spite of the observations and comments of many authors, of the songs composed upon it, and the great concourse of foreigners, no traveller has ever analyzed it with the boldness of dispassionate argument, and given its real character to such as have not seen it. A superficial description, or common place panegyric, is not the task required of such a narrator. With an appeal to truth, and, as I risk to pass for a splenetic observer, I will not enter into tedious details, but content myself with pointing out the most striking parts of that famous carnival, and exhibiting them in their true light.

These diversions are : 1st, plays ;
2d, routs ; 3d, the entertainments of St.
Mark's place ; to which may be added,
the

the *regatta*, or rowing match, which is sometimes given when some great prince is present at the carnival.

The plays, which are given upon seven different theatres, consist of serious and comic operas, ballets, comedies, farces, and pantomimes. The three first are of no moment to him who has frequented the theatres of London, Paris, and Vienna; nay even those of Naples, Rome, Turin, and Florence. A set of singers, dancers, and musicians join in a body, and borrow of Jews and Christians a certain sum limited by the permission of government, at 20, 30, or more per cent. This is intended as a security for the payment of the performers they may hire. Frequent are the disappointments they meet with, for they seldom engage above one singer to act the same part, of course the least indisposition of one of the principals, or any other little accident may ruin the whole body of those heroes, and frustrate all their hopes. Else-

where the mode of entertainment would be changed, but here it is impossible.—The great number of theatres causes the desertion of that which had the accident : should even the singer's recovery, or some other expedient remedy the evil, the credit of the theatre is irretrievably lost for that season. These circumstances give a sufficient hint of the frugality observed in all the preparations, which render it almost morally impossible to find a complete performance, like those usually seen in the above-mentioned cities. Sometimes the music is well managed, but the dresses are mean, and the decorations shocking. If a painter becomes a member of the company, his branch will be splendidly executed ; but the singers will perform badly, and their dancers will only hop. Adding to all this, certain indecent usages, which are only practised upon the Italian theatres, and the late hour of the play, which only begins after ten at night, it must be granted, that these
thea-

theatrical performances are not very enviable. What has been said is worse still with respect to the comic operas; he that goes to see them, does it either for the purpose of killing time, or for want of some other mode of dissipation.

What remains of those entertainments makes me forbear all mention. If no common comedy is acted (*comedia di carattere*) ten farces are given in its stead, consisting of the most nonsensical jokes of *pantalone*, *arlecchino*, and *tartaglia*, &c.—The actors of those parts are well paid, whilst the others get scarce as much as will satisfy their natural wants. It is incredible, how over-fond the Venetians and other Italians are of these farces. A serious subject meets with an empty house, but when they can relish their above favourite entertainments, the pit, boxes, and galleries are crammed with auditors.—Profound silence reigns, and all is attention. The like is to be observed with

respect to the puppet shows, which are not only the entertainments of the plebeian, but are honoured by ladies of the first rank.

Since games of hazard have been proscribed, the routs have nothing to recommend them to public favour. They are more brilliant in Naples, Rome, Vienna and London. There the number of strangers is never consulted; they increase the throng, but not the splendor of the feast, which can only be expected from an opulent and numerous nobility.

The entertainments on St. Mark's Place are partly common masquerades, partly the tricks of jugglers, jack puddings and wrestlers. It must be confessed, that they all are eminent masters of their respective branches. They excel much in making a pyramid of men; an art which broke many a neck. Six or seven people erect themselves upon each other,

other, and thus they proceed with regular and proportionate weight to the top, where at last a boy standing upon his head forms the summit. This exercise, which is no where to be seen but in Venice, according to Claudian, was already known to the ancient Romans, who performed it exactly in the same manner.

The peculiar situation of Venice forces every body that is in want of bodily exercise, to make St. Mark's Place subservient to his purpose, unless he had rather paddle through the most narrow and stinking streets. St. Mark's Place being, therefore, the general rendezvous at all times of the day, and frequented from the highest character down to the meanest plebeian, it naturally follows that this place, magnificent indeed, must in a little time appear to a stranger the most tedious spot on earth. The immense number of people, who, during the carnival, assemble continually upon it, makes the

throng so great, as to render them incapable to look about themselves, and much less to have an exact view of objects. The insufferable crawling and tumult of the crowd takes off all reflections. He that can lay hold of any of the chairs standing before the coffee-houses to fetch breath, may think himself very fortunate. After all, summoning up the tiresome uniformity and excessive incommodioufness which attends that place, every one must agree with me, that the sight of a numberless crowd of masks, many being dressed in Venetian dominos and uniform, can have nothing very attractive. I leave the reader to conclude from this sketch, how little that celebrated carnival answers its fame.

The Venetian fair, which usually begins on Ascension day, and lasts a fortnight, is also a kind of carnival; yet with this difference, that no person is allowed to appear masked in character, but
only

only in a Venetian domino. This fair would find few visitors, being held in the most delightful season of the year, when nature invites so much to her rural abodes, and Venice becomes the most loathsome place in the world ; but a prudent policy, added to it the magnificent wedding of the Doge, with the Adriatic sea, this ceremony draws together, besides foreigners from remote countries, all the unemployed people from terra firma, to be guests at the nuptials, should they only stay a few days.

In the year 1775 the number of those who arrived on the eve of Ascension day, amounted to 42480, exclusive of the preceding days. As this naval procession, for the sake of safety, is only performed in fair weather (it being put off in bad) it forms indeed as splendid a spectacle as can fall within the reach of human conception. The men of war, launched from the Arsenal, fully rigged, with
streamers

streamers and pendants flying, form a line, and salute with their guns and music the Buccentaur,* whilst she cuts the briny ocean, attended by several thousand gondolas. This salute is answered by a firing of cannons and volleys of musquetry from the forts adjacent to the sea. The late Emperor beheld that ceremony, in the above-mentioned year, in a paltry gondola. He refused all feasts and marks of distinction; nevertheless a regatta was given upon the great canal, near which he took up his residence at an inn.

These rowing matches, so much extolled by the Venetians, are the most insignificant sport under the sun. The spectators who fill the houses and the border of the canal, the carpets which hang out of the windows, besides some decorated barges belonging to the nobility,

* This is the name of the vessel that carries the Doge.

which

which sail up and down, constitute all that is interesting in that sight. The match is rowed in common boats, with only one man in each, who strives to bring his boat forwards. At that time there were twenty boats when they started, most of which kept soon behind, and at the bridge of Rialto I could see no more than five of them. The Venetians, who are as great gascons as the people of the Garonne, called this, *La famosissima Regatta* (the most famous rowing match). The three first who reach the point, receive prizes, which in all do not exceed 100 zechins. This, and the embellishing St. Mark's Place, where the shops are at other times separate, were then united, covered, and illuminated with lamps, was all the expence which the Republic bestowed upon so extraordinary an occasion. Thus Government consult œconomy, even in a time when all the newspapers, their own not excepted, were
filled

filled with previous accounts of extraordinary *fêtes* never exhibited before.

People are accustomed to speak of the arsenal at Venice with a kind of enthusiasm, and travellers make it the first object of their curiosity. Nothing, however, presents itself here to the eye of the impartial observer, but what is better in other countries beyond all comparison. It is not difficult to trace the cause of that illusion. The situation of Venice renders it necessary that the works and implements of war should be consigned to one and the same place. That place, which is encompassed with a wall, is called the arsenal. It contains, besides all necessary warlike stores, the Venetian ships of the line, gallies, *galleons*, and other vessels; also a cannon foundery, a gun manufactory, a place for boiling salt-petre, and manufactures of canvas, tackle, &c. In short, you find here united all that is required for war, either by water or by land,

land, whereas elsewhere a particular place is destined for the making of every article. Adding to this, all the work-places of the workmen, the cazerns of the garrison, the admiral docks, the ship-builders and soldiers, who are all quartered in this district, it may easily be conceived, how much this enormous whole dazzles the eye: yet it contains nothing but what will be found upon a much larger scale, but in separate departments, not only in Portsmouth, Chatham and Brest, but even in Copenhagen. I must, however, bestow praises upon a certain method adopted in this arsenal, which, notwithstanding its evident utility, has been imitated no where else. This is the covering of the unrigged men of war, to preserve them against the bad effects of the weather. The age and lasting good state of a great number of the Venetian men of war, furnish a most convincing proof of the good effects of that expedient. A friend of mine recommended it to the celebrated Lord Sand-

S ch, at that time First Lord of the Admiralty, but the great emoluments arising to his lordship from the building of new ships, made him naturally prefer his own private interest to the advantage of the state; he, of course, was little disposed to listen to such like proposals. The warlike stores in this arsenal are much fitter for inspection than for use. The prodigious quantity of guns, swords, &c. were they not consumed with rust, would be even now as totally useless as the numerous armours of the middle age, which are kept here for show. Taking the whole mass together, it makes an impression on a common traveller, and he joins the echo, which proclaims this arsenal the wonder of the world. It may, perhaps, have been matchless in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and deserving its fame; but from the present change of times, I venture to maintain, that it will not accoutre properly a modern Prussian regiment of

foot, and much less fit out a numerous fleet, with such armaments as the age requires. To this add the great ignorance of their officers, both by land and sea, the fruit of too lasting a peace. Whatever great things the Government of Venice may think themselves in the right to boast of with regard to the arsenal, the more degrading is the state of the navy, which hardly suffices to protect the Venetian trade against the pirates, and to frighten their nests of rapine.*

The Venetian and all other Italian sailors do not display the hardiness and de-

* The squadron of the Chevalier Emo has not long since confirmed this judgement upon the Venetian marine. In 1786 it could scarcely frighten the Tunese. The expences of the expedition were not only quite infructuous, but the consequence was, that it threw a national stigma upon the proud republic of Venice; and the Senate was obliged to pay the pirates a considerable tribute.

fiance.

fiance of all dangers, so natural to that class of men in the northern parts of Europe. The least storm makes them fly to their rosary, and more taken up with prayer than work, they commit the ship to the fury of the waves : mean time it ought to be remarked, that they eat no meat on fast-days, but make the sign of the cross before it.

The landsmen are more like banditti than soldiers. Bad cloaths, an equal want of discipline and honour, makes them the worst troops in Italy, even without excepting those of the pope. No expedition can make them worthy of notice. It may be said that the warlike virtues of the Venetians were buried under the ruins of Candia. It is well known, that in the famous siege of Corfu, the very officers of the garrison, some of whom were nobles, urged the brave General Schulenburg, soon after the commencement of the siege, to surrender the town to the Turks.

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They preferred slavery to making any farther resistance. Lucky for Venice, that Schulenburg, who before then had commanded, with great honour, against Charles XII. of Sweden, was not infected with the same spirit of cowardice, but saved, through his gallant conduct, that bulwark of Italy. These armed milksops shewed a few years ago how unworthy they were of the very name of soldiers. The Emperor drew up a cordon against the plague upon the frontiers of Dalmatia. The hussars, who had received orders to march for that purpose, met with some Venetian regiments of foot, brought thither by the same motive, who drew up in parade at the approach of the Imperial troops. The hussars intended to be even with them with regard to that show of honour, and, the word of command being given, they all drew their sabres. This martial movement wrought so forcibly on the Venetians, that the whole battalion,

as

as had it been previously agreed upon, took all at once to their heels.

A few of the Venetian nobles are rich, the rest are poor, even so poor, that many of them live in garrets, buy and dress their own victuals, and have no other means of subsistence than their vote, which the poorest as well as the rich may give in the Senate, and which makes the highest prerogative of the nobility. Nevertheless, these very poor carry pride and insolence to an extreme. It being a crime to touch them, they often emancipate themselves in giving such offences, as would meet with proper resentment in any other part of Europe. A French nobleman, in the crowd of St. Mark's Place, undesignedly shoved a little against a Venetian noble. The latter took him by the arm, and asked, which was the most clumsy animal? The Frenchman, alarmed at this conduct, answered, he believed, the elephant. "Well, Mr. Elephant,"

“phant,” replied the former, “learn to walk more cautiously whenever you meet a Venetian noble.” He that would not put up with the affront on similar occasions, would surely bring evil consequences upon himself. Every one of these beings thinks himself a prince: they exact the title of “Your Excellency” from every body, and very seldom use it towards others. If they have not a whole coat to their back, if they are as shabby as beggars, they nevertheless consider themselves as a particular class of men, which ought to inspire with respect, not only their own countrymen, but all nations. This absurd vanity, which must appear comical, when matched with want of power, causes the Venetian Envoys to make a very pompous entry at most courts. However sensible they are, or at least should be, of their inferiority, they feel no shame in assuming a prerogative above the ambassadors of the greatest powers, and this under the pretence of being

being nobles and senators, of course, belonging to the legislative power, and of being in several respects the representatives of the republic. Are not English ambassadors at foreign courts sometimes members and parts of the legislative power? And what a wide difference is there between the two, not only in their capacities and *active* sphere, but even in the freedom of speaking and acting! What a slave is the aristocratic tyrant compared to the English senator! A mere slave, whose liberty, honor and life are in the hands of three individuals, who, under the title of State Inquisitors, exercise their despotic sway less by law than by caprice, without the former having it in their power to bring them to an account. Howbeit it must be said, that they seldom make use of that power, yet it is done with the sanction of the fundamental laws of the republic.

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I have already observed, that this tribunal protects the citizen against the most oppressive violence of the nobles. That protection is, indeed, very necessary; the poor nobles would otherwise commit murder and robbery. I was myself an ocular witness to their unwarrantable actions in a particular occurrence, which, however, is very common here: it had so strong an effect upon me, that I thought I was not in Venice, but in Morocco. One of those tyrants entered a jeweller's shop and asked the price of a snuff-box. The master of the shop, knowing whom he had to deal with, told him, trembling, about half the usual price. This could not save him from investives, he was obliged to swallow a *birbo* (rogue), whilst the noble threw some change upon the counter, put the box in his pocket, and went away. The merchant, with a sorrowful countenance, took up the money; and when I expressed to him my surprise at this scene, he said, "What can we

“do? We ought to be content for not
“being used still worse. It must come
“far indeed before we make complaints,
“which in all respects are most detrimen-
“tal to ourselves.”

The well-known rigorous law, that will not suffer a noble to have any connection with foreign ministers or their dependents, a law, in many respects, equally absurd and ridiculous, becomes advantageous to the oppressed citizens, to keep their tyrants at a distance in private balls and other family recreations. This requires no more than to have a livery servant, belonging to some ambassador, to stand before the door. Such a sight discards at once the dance-loving senators, who, like the angel of destruction in Egypt, passes over the door thus marked. If this precaution is not taken, they will immediately intrude and predominate. Many tavern and coffee-house keepers adopt the same expedient to keep off
those

those troublesome guests, by prevailing on some body belonging to an ambassador to visit their coffee-house, which will have an infallible and desired effect.

In 1775 the senate, constrained by the too prevalent poverty of the nobles, opened the golden book, in which the names of the new-created members are written. This expedient has many a time been tried to recruit the nobility with rich supporters, and to increase the treasure. In the last Turkish war, the price of being created a noble ran as high as one hundred thousand ducats. Many merchants of Venice improved this opportunity, and gladly laid down that enormous sum for their diploma. But of late their proceeding was quite different; they only would admit candidates from the nobility of their terra firma, or their continental possessions. The conditions were: four ancestors, an annual income of ten thousand Venetian ducats, and a perpetual refi-

residence in Venice. The latter condition, which the policy of the state renders absolutely necessary, made a very few participate that gracious offer, which, however honourable, is but downright slavery. None of these nobles can travel out of the country, without leave of the state-inquisitors, who will rarely give their consent. None durst even venture to visit his gardens or country residence, if somewhat remote from the city. The above restriction, which extends to all foreigners who visit Venice, in case they have any connection with ambassadors, is the source of their ignorance with respect to the laws, manners, customs, and cultivation of other nations, and of the high opinion they have of their own state, which they consider as one of the most powerful on earth. As they are not destitute of natural good sense, this ignorance, added to their simple and circumscribed manner of living, might produce the greatest eccentricity of character, did not the iron
rod

rod of state-inquisition hover incessantly over their heads. The number of all the nobles who can appear in the senate, does now amount to one thousand four hundred and upwards. Happy for the administration that this senatorial tribe assembles but rarely, else the confusion would be endless.

As on certain days, when the senate meet in St. Mark's palace, foreigners are allowed to be present, and those meetings being held with dignity, order, and decorum, they are apt to look upon the senators with a kind of reverence, good-naturedly believing every other meeting to be like those to which they have been admitted. But it is a matter of fact, that when the doors are shut against them, dignity is frequently set aside, and replaced by confusion, low raileries, quarrels, and tumults. It is also not to be supposed, that a set of men, either free, or at least thinking themselves free, who are

governed by opposite passions, should keep within the bounds of moderation in such hours, when those very passions operate most forcibly upon them. It may therefore be looked upon as a maxim, that every republican assembly, in proportion to its members, betrays, more or less, something of a plebeian nature. Such Venetians and Genoese, who are no strangers to these political secrets, and are frank enough to speak the truth, will avow a matter confirmed by the parliamentary transactions of Great Britain and Ireland. However jealous of decorum and dignity the inhabitants of those islands show themselves in their familiar conversation and intercourse, yet the man, with his passions appears without mask in parliament; nay, I dare boldly assert, that the assemblies of the Athenian, Spartan, and Roman senates of much revered memory, have been subject to the self-same frailties.

It

It did not want any superior wisdom to build the Venetian constitution. The nobility arrogated to themselves both politic and civil power, and left it as an inheritance to their posterity. No middling dependent power is to be found here.—The citizen, the people, even the clergy, so powerful in other Roman Catholic countries, are here empty, unavailing shadows; the nobility alone hold the legislative and executive power in their own hands.

Fear, suspicion and mistrust are the pillars that support the government of Venice; parting from this principle they consider all European powers as clandestine enemies, and their ministers as dangerous persons. Nothing is more true, than their giving very great encouragement to informers. Morality is quite set aside, as the maintenance of aristocratic tyranny is looked upon as the greatest civil virtue. How little praise-worthy is therefore a go-

vernment, which, to form a good citizen, must first make him a bad man !

Never nation took it in their heads to invest three individuals with illimited power over the liberty, life, and death of their fellow citizens. To Venice alone was reserved the erecting so extraordinary a tribunal under the name of state-inquisition, whose despotic sway is unparalleled in Europe. It has ever been the maxim of all free states, not to trust with too great power a small number of men, for Machiavel justly observes : "*Few are suborned by few.*" But the Venetian nobles have been of opinion, that, in order to preserve aristocracy, and to prevent all the seditions of powerful families, it wanted absolutely a few individuals, whose province it should be, to act without all formalities. A few years back debates came on in the senate, about the abolishing of that inquisition, when it was found with surprize, that this power was
only

only in consequence of certain mandates, which had nothing to do with the constitution. Nothing, therefore, was easier than to reform that abuse; yet the contrary ensued, and in virtue of a decree of the senate, the great authority of the state-inquisition has now been passed into a formal law.

The elections to the offices of state are like the wheel of fortune, if the state is lucky, it will be well governed. Descent is here the chief law to which they tenaciously adhere. People are here well acquainted with the abuses and defects of administration, but they are tolerated as inveterate evils; for this reason they reject all projects of reform, offered by men of abilities. Innovations are incompatible with the politics of the Venetian government. The absurdity of such a system needs no proof, as a wise government should change its maxim according to times, to circumstances, and the cultiva-

tion of the people, and should in every degree adapt itself to the spirit of the times. All the European states have changed their civil political system, Venice only adhered invariably to her own. The Venetians make themselves ridiculous in adducing this as the cause of the permanent existence of their state, yet there is a kind of weakness, which is like natural death to states, and makes visible their inevitable dissolution. This is actually the case with this nominal republic: it may justly be said, that Venice is rotting in her *lacunas* (canals).

The power of the doge is very inconsiderable, even his influence in state affairs most insignificant. He stands exposed to daily humiliations, which he usually sustains partly in the senate, partly from the inquisitors. The day of his death is not a day of sadness, as in other states when princes die, but a day of rejoicing, of masquerades and balls. The senators lay
2 aside

aside their black dress, and cloath themselves in scarlet; in short their conduct seems to indicate, that the republic is going to receive a new life with a new doge.

The chief ornament of the doge bears likeness to a horn, but not to the horn of abundance, called otherwise *cornucopia*, for this prince is poor indeed. The republic gives him his board, but very scantily. He is a boarder of the state, supplied with what is most necessary to live, but all the magnificence annexed to his exalted dignity must be procured at the expence of his own private property. Whilst other European princes get rich by governing, the former gets poor.—Many a doge has been ruined by his station, and many a family is now reduced to indigence, because their ancestors have formerly been upon the princely throne.

There is no nation in Europe, the decline of whose state 'is more visible than

here. Decline of trade, of revenues, a wretched navy, a still more wretched army, and little political esteem from foreign powers. The senate a few years ago was in a very particular manner put in mind of that mortality.

These despots had never been humbled yet. Count Alexis Orlov was the man destined to that end. In 1772, whilst he commanded the Russian fleet in the Mediterranean, he directed his voyage to Venice. Here he purchased a great deal of ammunition, arms, and other necessaries for the fleet, and secretly enlisted Montenegrines and Ablanese into the Russian service. This stung the republic, who still looked as doubtful upon the happy success of the Russian arms in the Archipelago, and would give no reason of complaint to the Ottoman Porte. The Count was therefore desired to leave Venice instantly. His answer was, that he would go as soon as it would suit him. Mean
time

time he ordered to arms his officers, who amounted to above one hundred, to repel force by force. The wounded pride of the republic seemed to promise every violence at so unheard-of a resistance. The senate took the matter into consideration, and upon finding that they had too many reasons not to enforce obedience by power, they used gentler means. The Count was civilly requested, by deputies in the name of the republic, to retire with his retinue, as they durst not act against the neutrality resolved upon in the present war. The Count answered, that a representation and request of that kind might perhaps have made some impression on him, had they not been preceded by a positive command. He would receive orders by none but his mistress, and would go whenever he pleased. He was faithful to his word, and the senate thought it not adviseable to push things farther.

The

The main point of the police in Europe is to keep the common people within bounds; where the civil officers cannot do it, soldiers will; but in Venice great part of the common people themselves are used for that purpose, and in case of necessity, government put their whole dependence upon them. The particular situation of the city is the cause of that. It requires an infinite number of watermen, who are known by the name of gondoliers, and make a distinct sort of men. In Venice they reckon forty thousand, a number almost incredible, as there are not above one hundred and fifty thousand inhabitants. The gondoliers are indulged in every possible manner, and their misdemeanors are overlooked, because a great part of them stands in the pay of the nobles. These political maxims brought it about, that they became extremely devoted to the senate, and make its strongest support. They boast of great theatrical knowledge, and frequently

quently a play awaits its fate from their approbation. They display a deal of wit, and are great lovers of poetry. They can rehearse a great number of verses, which they chiefly sing by moonlight.

Though a gondolier is upon the sea day and night, yet he is unfit for a sailor. His abilities are only consigned to his gondola; his wishes go no farther than to steer it well, and to be subservient by legal or illegal means in amorous intrigues, which always fetch him a good reward. These people are indispensable in love adventures. Without them assassination becomes often the consequence of a gallantry. But they, knowing every winding and corner of the canals and streets, facilitate the escape, and cover the retreat if necessary. Some of them keep up a secret correspondence with the governesses and chambermaids, and procure rope ladders and false keys.

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It is a wonder, that of so many thousands of gondolas which are all day upon sea, never one perishes. There has never been an instance of such an accident. It is attributed to the great skillfulness of the gondoliers, or to the particular structure of the gondola. I cannot ascertain how far this be true; it is, however, strange, that such accidents usually happen in all commercial cities situate upon large rivers, whereas Venice, which lies in the middle of the sea, and all whose inhabitants swim about on planks during a great part of their life, have nothing of that kind to fear. The colour of all the gondolas are black. It is forbidden by a particular law to have them of a different colour, or to ornament them in some other manner, for this reason they are all quite uniform, and exhibit a dismal appearance. The foreign Ambassadors alone are at liberty to embellish their gondolas at their pleasure, a prerogative omitted by none of them.

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It must also be confessed, that these vessels join to safety a very great convenience, and that it is a pleasure to ride in them. I wonder how they have not been imitated upon the Thames and Seine, considering London and Paris are always so busy in creating new modes of recreations. I communicated this remark to an English gentleman of distinction, who was with me in Venice at the same time. He liked the idea, and ordered immediately a model of a gondola to be got ready, which was four feet long; he sent it by sea to England, but the ship that carried it was lost, and the project of the gondola has not been thought on ever since. The pleasure boats used at London, Marseilles, Hamburgh, &c. though they cost a deal of money, are but ill-shaped boats, compared to the gondolas.

The girls of pleasure are another class of beings who enjoy the special protection
of

of government. They belong to the entertainments of the carnival, which could not do well without them. Most part of those unfortunate females are sold by their parents in their tenderest infancy. These make a regular agreement with lovers, or dealers in maidenheads. It is done before a notary public, stands valid in every court of justice, and specifies a certain time when Miss is to be yielded up, upon paying a stipulated sum. The usual price is from one to two hundred zechins. The agreement usually sets forth the poverty of the parents, and the motive to procure the girl a dower, to enable her to be decently married. This, however, is a mere pretence, as the parents keep the money, and leave their daughters in the brothel. These nymphs observe most strictly their fasts, go daily to mass, and have their special tutelar saint, under whose auspices they exercise their profession with a good conscience.

Venice is a real paradise for the monks : they mask themselves for the carnival, frequent the theatres, keep mistresses, and do in general what they think proper. In no country the discipline of the church is in so bad a state. Several bishops attempted to refrain those extravagancies, but could not succeed ; it is even popularly reported; and perhaps not without foundation, that government made secretly prove abortive those good intentions. It seems to be a state maxim to the senate, jealous of every thing that can abridge their power, not to give the priests too much authority among the people ; a prerogative which caused but too much confusion in all Catholic states, and from which Venice has happily remained untainted. This accounts for the extreme allowance made to the immorality of the clergy, and for the internal tranquillity in their differences with the popes, which are sometimes carried to the highest pitch. This loose conduct lessens greatly the esteem of
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that spiritual body, and the senate preserves an entire authority. Their proverb is known: "*Siamo Veneziani e poi Cristiani.*" Let us first be Venetians and then Christians.

The Venetians in general care little about God, less about the pope, but a great deal about St. Mark. This saint was chosen the patron of the city, as soon as his body had been brought over from Alexandria. St. Theodore was formerly their tutelar saint, but their vanity was too great to put up with an undertrapper, he would just do when the republic was still in her infancy, but when she became great and flourishing, they required a saint of the first rate. The body of St. Mark was brought over, they built it a magnificent church, and shabbily dismissed their old protector.

St. Mark's church is the most magnificent, and most beautiful monument of architecture

chitecture of the tenth century. At that time Venice was the finest city in all Italy: its palaces, churches, and other public buildings were mostly built by Greek masters, and show still in their remains the taste of those times. But the best works of architecture which Venice exhibits, are productions of the sixteenth century, when Sansovino and Palladio embellished the city with so many splendid edifices.

Sansovino, a native of Florence, pupil of the famous Sangallo, was architect to the republic; he was succeeded after his death by the great Palladio. The most beautiful churches and palaces were constructed at this epoch. Sansovino built the mint, called *Zecca*, the palace of the procurators, and St. Mark's Library; but he had a misfortune in building the latter, a misfortune which characterizes the spirit of the Venetian government such as it from all times was, and now is. Sansovino gave the most ingenious and
no-

noblest models for the building of this celebrated library, and made the attempt to embellish it by a vault, constructed in a most singular and ingenious manner. But he was not successful, the vault fell in; the government, deaf to every justification, ordered the artist to be thrown into prison, where, regardless to his great abilities, he languished for a long while. At last he was set free, but deprived of his post, and condemned to a considerable fine. After reiterated entreaties and petitions he was suffered to re-establish the vaults, upon which a pardon was granted him.

SECT.

S E C T. III.

St. Mark's Place. — Political Debates. — Dress. — Ladies. — St. Mark's Palace. — Stone lions. — Isle of Rialto. — Canals (lacunas.) Giocondo. — Bridges. — Manners and way of thinking of the Venetians. — Padua. — Infamous debtor stone. — Vincenza. — Olympic Theatre. — Bergamo. — Brescia. — Verona. — Plays acted in the amphitheatre of that city. — Policy of the Venetian Senate.

THE aspect of St. Mark's place must be confessed magnificent. All the objects that surround it are great, beautiful, and noble, except the graceless Gothic tower, which forms a great contrast with the other edifices, and produces the same effect as harlequin would in a tragedy. The place is surrounded with a portico, where

where there is nothing but coffee-houses and *cassinos*,* which are visited by select parties of both sexes, as the ladies do not use coffee-houses. The former have no doors, but are, properly speaking, large niches provided with chairs, upon which indolent people keep sitting during the whole day. As they always use a certain coffee-house by preference, where they sit as it were, motionless, and wrapt up in their cloaks, they may be considered as real groups belonging to the niches.—Throughout Italy people do not talk so little as in these houses.; let us be ever so satirical against coffee-house politics, we must, however, grant that they are the soul of all conversations in public meetings. Forbid a topic, in which the most ignorant, nay even the greatest block-head, thinks himself somewhat conversant, and social life will receive a deadly blow.

* Private rooms where the parties lock themselves up.

Of this truth Venice furnishes the most irrefragable proof. The inhabitants are the most sprightly of all Italy, and show even their cheerful temper in private societies, but on places of public resort they are dumb. Yet what would you have them speak, as politics are high treason, and the monopoly of the senate? Would you have them speak of commerce? it leads to politics, so does every thing referring to legislature; so do the principal sciences, as history, geography, &c. nay religion itself. Thus nothing is left to the Venetians, but the arts, and under this denomination I comprehend only the theatrical arts, as the others are now here, as well as in all other parts of Italy, upon their decline. Even of the former they get their fill during the carnival, and there remains nothing at all.

I beg leave to observe, that the superior sociableness of the most cultivated countries in Europe has no other epoch,

than the social debates of political matters; nay I dare maintain, that this so much derided fashion contributed to cultivation, and that from the manifold knowledge required, they in some respect are, and always will be the scale of cultivation among nations. Remember the time when the people of Athens and Rome interfered with public affairs, when the orations of great men operated most forcibly, gave new ideas and fresh knowledge to the ignorant, because they were held often, and in the public market. When ceased that diffusion of knowledge? with the breaking in of tyranny and barbarism, under whose iron yoke the inhabitants of Europe groaned for so many centuries, till a more improved state of science by degrees made us again politicians. The English, the most enlightened nation on earth, as granted by Voltaire, Montesquieu, Raynal, even by Linguet, are chiefly indebted for that superiority to the great and active interference with

with public affairs, which generates national spirit, which, let it be ever so degenerate, cannot exist without multifarious mental accomplishments. In Portugal and Sicily hardly any body reads newspapers, hence the inhabitants of these states look upon the protestants as a species of man-eaters; nay thousands of the rabble are convinced, that the protestants, from a bodily mark, are like branded by God for everlasting damnation.—

Let him that wants farther proofs, cast his eyes upon the East, whose slavish nations never thought of troubling their heads about the affairs of their country, and less still about those of foreign states.

The inhabitants of the greatest oriental cities are often ignorant of the principal events that happen in the palace of their despots, who have, many times, in such cases punished curiosity with death. I will now leave this perhaps not unseasonable subject, and return to Venice.

All the inhabitants of this city, who either are no plebeians, or do not wish to be numbered among them, wear red cloaks. This commodious fashion is even imitated by the foreign ambassadors. It appears like a republican uniformity, though founded upon some other cause. The person wrapt up in such a cloak, which must also muffle one half of the face, is drest as incognito, and exempt from all marks of politeness, which his aristocratic tyrants would otherwise exact. The latter alone wear no cloaks, but appear always in their black dress, much like bed gowns (*robes de chambre*) in order that no one under pretence of ignorance, should misbehave to them.—However, when they have a mind to make night rambles without being known, they use the red cloak. Recollecting that St. Mark's place is the only one in this great city destined for walking, to which people of every description resort in crowds, and where the poor nobles are
encamped

encamped all day long, the reader must acknowledge the necessity of an expedient, to prevent all ceremonial politeness.

On solemn occasions, the nobles go dressed in red, but their dress is exactly the model of the black one, and to this they add large wigs. If they dance in that dress, it really makes a most droll appearance. I was at a great ball, given in 1775, by Pisani, one of the richest nobles, upon his being elected to the office of *Procurator* of St. Mark's. It was a royal feast, and notwithstanding the sight being offended by this senatorial dress, so unfit for dancing, the ladies made sufficient amends, being the most beautiful in Italy, and knowing how to dress in a most elegant style.

Besides beauty, the Venetian ladies boast also of other graces; they are very sprightly and pleasing chatterers; their dress consists in a wear that keeps tight to

the body, and trails from behind; over it they throw a large black silk veil, which they tie together upon the back, so that face, bosom, arms and shape remain free, and from the most tasteful way of putting it on, makes a most graceful dress. But all their charms are half lost, as the free commerce with ladies is not lawful to an Italian. The men must stick to the men, which augments the reserve and seriousness of the sex, properties common to the whole nation.

St. Mark's palace is certainly the finest Gothic edifice in Europe. Its external, peculiar, and elegant structure is striking, and the internal part splendid and majestic.—The great halls parade with pictures, referring to the history of the republic. One among them represents the extraordinary event of Frederick I. Emperor of Germany, who in 1175 was delivered at Venice, by Pope Alexander, from the church Ban, with great solemnities. That Emperor,

peror, according to history, is painted prostrate before the pope, receiving his absolution. When Joseph II. visited this palace, the Venetians out of delicacy, did not like to show him that picture; they endeavoured, therefore, to engage his attention by other objects, but it was in vain, Joseph perceived it, and being informed with the greatest moderation of the subject, he, smiling, exclaimed: "*tempi passati!*" (past times!) There is, however, a thing in this palace which must make a most disagreeable impression upon an observing traveller, it is the filthiness of the Venetians, whether or not belonging to the palace. Every one permits himself to do his business here. Not only the entrance, but the very stairs are like a sink. Go where you will, you find whole rills of stinking water, and smell its noxious exhalations. The nobles, who honestly contribute their share, never mind, and paddle through it with lifted-up

gowns. This nastiness spreads as far as the doors of the apartments.

Before the palace are the famous stone lions, with open jaws, through which the spies of the state, or other informers of its inquisition let pass their reports. The republic has realized here the ideas of poets, who transport us into the golden times of fairies, when dragons and lions, apparently inanimate, though most formidable, were the guardians of enchanted castles. Even these lions, in a strict sense, protect the aristocratic senate, whose throne is St. Mark's palace. Through these quadripeds numberless important discoveries have already been made, dangerous attempts stifled in embryo, and to this very hour their aspect strikes equally with fear and terror.

It is now a prevalent opinion of some, that this custom is abolished, that the jealous republic gets her reports by other means;

means; yet the superscription upon those lions: "*Denunzie secrete*," (secret informations) with their communication to the lower department, confirms sufficiently to what purpose they have formerly been used, and there remains a just doubt, whether this commodious custom has been abolished.

That part of St. Mark's place which leads to the harbour, is adorned with pillars, the one of a beautiful granite, the other only of common stone, which was imitated for the sake of symmetry, because that which was destined to have matched the former, and which consisted of granite too, fell into the sea, through the awkwardness of those who were to land it.— Both had been brought over from Constantinople, after the Venetians had taken that capital. Between these two pillars, which stand quite free, the malefactors are executed. This throws a notion of dishonour upon the space between them,

and you will never see people of genteel appearance, and less still the nobles, pass between them. Yet their beautiful situation, and the crowd, makes whole thousands mindless of that scruple; they follow the example of foreigners who pass between them.

The Isle of Rialto lies amidst the great number of islands, of which Venice does consist, and is like the centre of the Venetian state. Hither fled the first families, who left the continent when the Visigoths made their irruption into Italy. Among them was Entinopus, an architect, a native of Candia, resident at Padua, who took refuge from those cruel enemies.—Rialto, the principal island in the *lacunas* (canals) was pitched upon as a residence for him and his followers, who amounted to twenty-four families. Here Entinopus built a church in honour of St. James, which is still to be seen, also twenty-four houses, or rather cottages, for himself and his

his companions, whose progeny mostly governs the republic to this day. The famous bridge belonging to the island, was built by Palladio, and consists of a single arch, which goes over the great canal. It is built of pure marble, but its appearance is not ornamental, because the unpolished marble looks like common stone; the ugly shops that stand upon it, the great number of steps which must be ascended and descended, and many other things, make it the most incommodious bridge that can be imagined. It owes its fame to a great arch, whose skilful structure cannot, however, atone for that great defect—incommodioufness.

Notwithstanding the admirable situation of Venice, it makes no great impression upon a stranger, as the infectious stink, inseparable from the place, is for some time exceeding loathsome to those who arrive. But by degrees the nerves of smell are hebetated, and this exhalation

which pervades the whole town, becomes supportable. It does not affect health, which is proved by the bills of mortality, proportionate to those of other great cities. Notwithstanding the cause of the increase of this bad smell makes the senate very uneasy; for though the canals be most carefully cleansed, the increase of the mud baffles all efforts, and the water lowers by degrees. In many places we find incontestable proofs of the former height of the water, which is an infallible *prognosticon* of what is to come. Several of the learned say, that this unfortunate epoch will not exceed two hundred years. Then this so much-admired city is to become desolate, our posterity will go there to see it, as we now do with Pompeia, until the filth be all dried up, and another nation, undoubtedly with other manners and customs, and probably without an inquisition, will take possession of the magnificent ruins.

The

The Roman commonwealth could not have been more strictly connected with the existence of Rome, than the Venetian commonwealth with the city of Venice ; as upon the latter, constitution, laws, the duration of ancient customs, and political maxims, in short, every thing is built: objects, which in no commonwealth of the globe underwent as little alteration as here; but there has also never been one that maintained itself so long. It is, therefore, natural in the senate, to take so extraordinary a care for the lasting continuance of that city. Venice may be considered as an enormous store-ship, to which nature and art have for so many years served as an anchor. All the proposals of able architects, tending to its preservation, are carefully listened and frequently attended to. Expence in this point is no object. The chief expedients for cleansing, now in use, are enormous machines, skilfully constructed, which swim upon the great canal, to carry away the filth. These means

means, though efficient, fall short of so great a purpose.

Near Palestrina, a small maritime town, the Republic causes a wall to be erected within the sea, as a dike against that formidable element. The works have been carried on for these many years, and according to the plan, the length of the wall is to be twelve Italian miles. A certain traveller (Bioernstaehl) who received all reports, and set them down without any farther reflection, says in great earnest, and without omitting the least circumstance, that every cubic foot of this wall costs no less than twenty, and with materials about sixty zechins. The reader, in conformity to this assertion, ought therefore to represent to himself a high and thick wall, twelve Venetian miles in length, and it will produce a greater sum than there is gold and silver coin on earth. Yet I am assured, that by this time a third part of that stupendous work is finished, which,

which, according to the learned Bioernstaehl, must have cost the Republic only the sum of a thousand millions of zechins within these twenty or thirty years. It is certain, however, that the expence is enormous, though perfectly justified by the greatness of the danger in which the state seems to be involved.*

The evil was already so great in the sixteenth century, as to threaten the republic with ruin. A Dominican friar saved the city, and by so great a merit, the Senator Conaro declared him publicly the second founder of Venice. This man, even great in a friar's frock, was called Giocondo; he being not, by all, sufficiently known, I will give a more minute account of him. He was a Venetian, entered the Order very early, and went afterwards to Rome to pursue his studies. He learned the languages of the

* This work was first published in 1787. *Translator.*

ancients, and was thoroughly versed in the classics. Some time after he published the works of Vitruvius and Vegetius, with plates and commentaries of his own. His labour displayed his great genius for architecture, of which he soon exhibited a striking specimen. The great stone bridge at Verona was in danger of being destroyed by the river Addigio; they knew not how to secure the arches. Giocondo said he had found the best means in the commentaries of Cæsar. He therefore made use of the same method which was adopted by that great general, in building a bridge over the Rhone. Giocondo's enterprize succeeded and built his fame. Lewis XII. King of France sent for him to Paris, where, among other bridges, he built that of *Notre Dame*, which may still be seen to this very hour. Soon after he did the above-mentioned great service to his country. The waters of the Brenta brought continually sand and filth into the canals, which

which increased to such a degree, that it was apprehended they would soon be unfit for navigation. Giocondo had a canal dug, which conducted one part of the waters towards Chioggia, and caused the other to stream with such rapidity into the *lacunas*, so as to cleanse them entirely. One time, when the bridge of Rialto, besides many others, were accidentally destroyed by fire, Giocondo was desired to tender new plans for rebuilding them; he did so, but they were not attended to. This neglect made him fret to such a degree, that he left his country soon after, and went to Rome, where he died in an advanced age, after having directed the building of St. Peter's, in concert with Raphaël and Sangallo.

The great number of bridges which join the islands together, are all single arched, and without ballustrade or rails. It is remarkable, that people are drowned so very rarely; this chiefly arises because
cause

cause the Venetians, like the Italians in general, are very little given to drunkenness; an admirable quality in this city, where the inhabitants are bereft of so many amusements. You will find here grown people who have never seen a horse in their lives; there are some, however, used in riding schools. Those of the people who never have been on the continent have no notion of coaches, waggons, carts, ploughs, gardens and a hundred other things that seem quite inseparable from the cultivation of a nation.

The republic possesses, in a small district, some very considerable towns, viz. Padua, Verona, Vincenza, Bergamo, and Brescia. Padua, which has been celebrated for so many ages for her power, and as a seat of learning, exhibits now a dismal image of change and instability to the eye of the traveller: the wretched state of this town beggars all description. To and fro you will find magnificent churches

churches and palaces, monuments of its former flourishing state; but they are either situate in the fields, or in narrow windings and dirty streets, which baffled all the skill of Palladio, so much exerted here by that great master. In those obscure streets you see the poor, ragged, pale, and emaciated inhabitants, who, like as many spectres, seem to haunt those walls. Add to this the dress—the men being wrapt up in frightful cloaks; the great number of monks, who are to be met here in whole groups; and the numerous convents, which continually stun the ears by the tolling of their bells: in short, you find here nothing but what degrades humanity, and dispels social pleasures. Ignorance has fixed her chief residence in this town, which goes by the name of the learned (*La dotta*). Superstition is not so great in Naples as in Padua, whose inhabitants have continually the tomb of St. Anthony before their eyes. The reverence shewn to that saint

is

is so great, that in general he only goes by the name of *The Saint* (*il Santo*). The church dedicated to him, is one of the most splendid in Italy, and was built by the celebrated Nicola da Pisa. It is chiefly remarkable for its most beautiful bas reliefs, which, for the most part, are the work of Nicola himself, and represent the miracles of that saint, and his preaching to the fishes. Notwithstanding the poverty of this city, great treasures have been lavished upon the tomb of the saint. These treasures surpass by far those of Prague and Naples, which may be seen at the tombs of St. Nepomocene and St. Januarius.

There reigns a very strange custom at Padua, which is also usual in some places in Lombardy. If a man cannot pay his debts, and is otherwise so poor, as not to be worth five *lires*,* he may free himself

* An Italian coin.

from all the demands of his creditors, by exposing formally, before the court of justice, his great poverty. But with this declaration is connected a ceremony so extremely shameful, that people have rarely recourse to that expedient. It consists in the debtor's being obliged to sit down, for one hour, with his *nude posteriors* upon a stone standing before the Townhouse, and to be looked at in this posture by the people, all the while he is surrounded by the sbirrs. As this ceremony is looked upon as the very verge of infamy, and is as bad as if in other countries a man is branded with a red-hot iron, it takes place very rarely, it would otherwise be a daily show in so poor a town as Padua, and lose, of course, its effect.

Vincenza is the native town of Palladio, which he also embellished with magnificent buildings. No monument of his is more remarkable than the Olympic theatre, which he built here at the desire
of

of a learned society, that went by the name of the Olympian, and wished for a model of a theatre of the ancients. Palladio took for pattern the theatre of Marcellus at Rome, and carried on his undertaking in a most excellent manner; unfortunately, however, he departed life before the building could be completed, and its necessary ornaments added. It was afterwards continued by Scamozzi, who managed it very unskilfully. This edifice remains, however, the greatest ornament of the town. Palladio wrote commentaries upon Vitruvius, Cæsar, and Polybius. But these works were never printed, and lay, perhaps, buried in some private library.

Notwithstanding the small extent of the Venetian territories, the cunning of the finest politics are made use of in governing them. Towns adjacent to one another are treated in a very different manner—a policy unparalleled in other European states. Vincenza and Bergamo,

mo, the former of which submitted freely to the republic, and the latter inhabited by an unruly and desperate set of people, who are the most egregious banditti of all Italy, are treated with great lenity. This lasting gratitude towards Vincenza, reflects honour upon the senate; and it is also, among all towns, the most addicted to the senatorial sway. With respect to Bergamo, the republic is not actuated by generosity but by fear. The situation of that place, the character of the inhabitants, who are often found on the highway in troops and well armed, carrying smuggled goods, render necessary the indulgence of a weak state. The same lenity is extended to the town of Brescia, on account of its situation upon the frontiers of Milan. But the treatment of Verona is quite different, as they know it is very averse to the Venetian constitution, and prefers and wishes to be governed by the house of Austria, whose states are bordering upon the district

trict of Verona. The small imperial town of Roveredo, situate at a small distance from here, whose flourishing commerce continually starts among the Veronese, the idea of what their town might be under such a sceptre, justifies still more its disinclination to the aristocratic government. For this reason, this city is treated without the smallest sense of indulgence, as a place, whose period of subjection is looked upon as uncertain.

When the late emperor passed through Verona in 1771, a feast was given him, perhaps the only of its kind, and it struck him with a most sudden surprize. It was merely a bull-fight, but exhibited in the Roman amphitheatre, whose inside, as is well known, retains still the ancient structure, and is carefully preserved. It is called the *Arena*. Of all Roman antiquities, whose remains are still extant in so many countries, none has withstood time

time so much than this memorable edifice. Its form is oval, and the structure similar to the Coliseum at Rome: its length 464 feet, and the breadth 367. It may contain 22000 spectators.

The late emperor beheld this amphitheatre with admiration; afterwards the governor of the town invited him to a play. The preparations were concealed from the emperor; he was conducted to that entrance which was the least crowded by the people. Not expecting to see any thing uncommon; he mounted the old Roman stairs, and quite of a sudden passed through an opening to his seat, where he saw, in so small a space, all the inhabitants of the town and the neighbouring villages, who filled the amphitheatre from the bottom to the very top: immediately they all rose, and received Joseph with an universal clapping of hands and bursts of applause—a sight which quite enraptured the monarch.

Of all the cities in the Venetian territory, Padua, whose wretched state has been described above, feels most the misfortune of an oppressive government. The highest imposts, the most rigorous laws, inexorable punishment in case of petty offences, and hinderance from all measures to forward the welfare of the place. Hence springs the extreme poverty of that city, to which, in point of extent, few are equal in Italy, and whose population amounts to forty thousand souls. Thus Venice avenges the troubles and dangers, which Padua, once flourishing and independent, caused her for so many centuries.

In the present political balance of Europe, Venice loses every consideration; and her long-preserved independence is only founded upon the moderation of the powerful neighbour, who has her fate in his own hands.

S E C T. IV.

MILAN.—*Manners of the Milaneſe.*—*Nobility.*—*Love of a Country Life.*—*New Theatre.*—*Cathedral.*—*St. Charles Borromeus.*—*Sardinian Court.*—*Piedmont.*—*Character of the Piedmonteſe.*—*Flourishing State of Piedmont.*—*Government.*—*Nizza.*—*Military State of Sardinia.*—*Parallel between its Troops.*—*Royal Revenue.*—*Parma.*—*Placenza.*—*Ferrara.*—*Bologna.*—*Thefts rarely committed in Italy, and the reaſon why?*—*Bologneſe Nobility.*—*Univerſity.*—*River Rubicon.*—*Ancona.*—*Loretto.*—*The Holy Houſe.*—*Fanaticiſm of a great German Princeſs.*

NO part of Italy is more like a garden than Lombardy. That fine country is the moſt populated and moſt cultivated. Milan, its capital, is, after

Rome, the greatest city in Italy: it is, however, not populous enough in proportion to its extent. From the most ancient records this city was remarkable for continually changing its governors. The manners of the different rulers have made impression upon those of the inhabitants, who distinguish themselves from all other Italians. What is hardly perceptible in single individuals, becomes striking here in all. The Spaniards have left them a kind of *grandezza*, which is chiefly peculiar to the nobility. The French, by their continual wars, have refined the social *ton* of the Milanese, promoted the intercourse with the fair sex, and introduced, in general, a certain degree of social virtue, predominant no where else in Italy: the Austrians taught them hospitality and good nature, which they brought them from Vienna, the *emporium* of that godlike virtue.

A great

A great deal of good was done during the wise administration of count Firmian. His power was very great, yet no minister could ever make better use of it than he did. Even the haughty nobles acquiesced in his conduct, and entertained the highest regard for him. These nobles, both numerous and rich, are uncommonly fond of pomp, and shew it in beautiful carriages, a great number of horses, and running footmen. The latter consider Milan as the only school for their art, and supply not only a great part of Italy, but also the southern provinces of Germany. The wages of these creatures are naturally small in a place which is their staple, and which abounds with them; for this reason, many a single nobleman keeps three, four, or more of them. Their chief duty is to accompany their lord to the *Gorso*, a public walk where the nobility meet every day, if the weather is fair, not to walk about, but to ride up and down in their carriages. No conversation takes

place, except a few words, when the carriages meet one another. The only intent of these *walk-riders* is to see, or rather to be seen. This absurd recreation is common to all the great cities of Italy.

The Milanese nobility also distinguish themselves by their fondness of a rural life; in summer, the first families leave the capital, and spend the greatest part of that fine season, and the whole autumn on their beautiful country seats, which are, for the most part, situated in a charming district called *Monte di Brianza*. One part of these country seats goes by the name of *Capucinas*, because they are built upon the plan of the Milanese convents of Capuchins. They have a great number of little rooms in form of cells, destined for the reception of their friends, who, in great numbers, travel from one *Capucina* to another, and enjoy those hospitable conveniencies.

The

The new theatre at Milan is looked upon as the largest and finest in all Italy, but in the remotest part of the house, it is impossible either to see or to hear. The boxes of the nobility are as large as apartments, and furnished most sumptuously with valuable tapestry, chandeliers, looking-glasses, and sofas, according to the taste and means of the proprietor, which diversity has a very fine effect: each box has a private closet adjoining to it, some of them have two. When the theatre was first built, the subscription for the right or property of a box, amounted to two, three, and some to four thousand scudi. But the annual subscriptions for the benefit of the actors is but trifling. I saw here the finest theatrical decorations I ever beheld in Italy: they belonged to a ballet, intitled Cleopatra, in which, instead of dancing, they jumped. I never saw a more wretched pantomime, representing an heroical subject: it was the greatest parody upon that event so famous

in history, which, by the death of Cleopatra and Antony, gave a new governor to the world. The artist had made use of all his art to conduct the spectator's mind into the subterranean vaults of Alexandria, and he succeeded most wonderfully. But the grimaces of the tumblers did away the short illusion, which in a well-acted tragedy, would have been lasting and enrapturing.

The so much-celebrated cathedral has nothing striking: its chief excellence consists in a great number of statues, and a treasure of marble. They are continually working at it, not so much to complete the building, as to repair what has fallen. The inside of the church, or rather the building, such as it is now, was already completed in the fifteenth century by Cezariani, after the famous architect, Bramante, the master of the great Raphaël, had examined the structure.

The

The tutelar saint of Milan is St. Charles Boromeus. If there is one in the Roman legend worthy of respect, it is certainly this saint, who, besides his piety and godliness, acquired a just title to the reverence of his countrymen, by a most active life, full of beneficence and generous deeds, the effects of which are felt to this very day. His riches enabled him to make many foundations, and to perform a number of noble deeds. At the early age of twenty-two he was created archbishop, and died in his forty-second year. His death was the despair of all Milan. The fame of the deceased, the entreaties of his fellow-citizens, and the liberalities of his opulent friends, made the papal see recede from a custom, which will not suffer a saint to be canonized till fifty years after his decease. His name, however, graced the Roman legend after a space of thirty years. His mother was then living, she was a lady of a very advanced age, and shared the pleasure, which has never

been the lot of a christian woman, to see her son revered on the altars of churches, and genuflections made before his shrine.

In 1756 the MSS. works of Bramante upon architecture, painting, and the arts in general, were found in a private library. They were written in Italian, and I doubt whether they are translated.

P I E D M O N T.

The Sardinian court enjoys long since the glory of being a pattern in politics, finances, and military affairs. Indeed the crown, which this little state acquired by all the arts of politics, and the respectable appearance it kept up ever since, are proofs of an excellent policy. Such a system wanted a great number of troops, and

and to maintain them a well ordained state œconomy, all which are found here. The king himself is a great œconomist, and his court distinguishes itself by an excellent parsimony. The nobility are in no great city of Italy, as poor as they are here, for this reason they are content with small perquisites. Their ministers, resident at foreign courts, are treated in proportion, for instance, the envoys to Holland and Genoa have no more than three thousand rix dollars per annum.

No nobleman dares travel without express leave from the king; he must also obtain the latter to enter foreign service. To lend money out of the country is entirely prohibited. The nobility is saleable as in all other parts of Italy. If a foreigner desires to settle in the country, he must go through the formality of naturalization, and take the oath of fidelity and allegiance.

The character of the Piedmontese is remarkable for a gravity, so uncommon to other Italians. It is a singular circumstance, that Piedmont neither in ancient nor modern times, as far as the annals of that country can be traced, has ever produced a poet, nor was there ever an *improvvisatore* (extempore poet) born here.— They are even reproached with insensibility at the sight of the most beautiful pictures of Ariost and Tasso, productions which enrapture other Italians. They have nevertheless cultivated some sciences with no inconsiderable success, viz. mathematics, phyfic and law. But their artists cannot keep pace with those of other Italian provinces; yet they pass for the best gamesters in Europe.

The nobility being poor, and not fond of sciences, every nobleman flocks to the military standard. Their ignorance is so great, that few among them can speak Italian with propriety, and smaller still is
the

the number of those whose understand Latin. The other gentry follow their example, for this reason Piedmont belongs to the *superlative* of Italian bigotry. They also distinguish their character, as great admirers of the French, inveterate enemies of the Genoese, and despisers of all other Italian races, who, on that head, do not neglect to be even with them.

Otherwise the people of Piedmont pass for the Gascons of Italy. It is true, that they make too much of their own good qualities, though well founded in other respects. Their country is as much the most flourishing in Italy, as it excels other states in activity and industry. The same may be said of the good order which reigns in all the branches of administration; even their police, so bad in other provinces in Italy, becomes remarkable, though subject to very great defects.— Thus among many other things, the capital, for instance, is not lighted at night.

They,

They, however, practise cleanliness, a thing so rare beyond the Alps, and the king sets the example in his own palace. The uniformity of buildings seems to be at home here, and the structure of the capital is a pattern, which happily has not been imitated any where else; for in spite of its being striking at first, it never fails to disgust soon after. In the street of the Po, the finest in Turin, the houses are all of one height, which undoes all that can please the eye.

The flourishing state of Piedmont depends chiefly upon the silk trade. The English alone purchase annually a quantity of silk, which amounts to 200,000*l.* sterling, and mostly pay for it in ready money, because the duty on English commodities is so high, that they may be looked upon little better than prohibited. Should the English one day be able to find a better market for purchasing that article, the
trade

trade of Piedmont would not only suffer a mortal blow, but it would totally put a period to its flourishing state,

The tobacco manufactures belong exclusively to the king; hence this commodity is sold very dear, and the laws against smugglers are cruel to an extreme. He that carries on the tobacco trade secretly, is condemned to the galleys for life.

Notwithstanding the superiority of administration in this country, public and expensive undertakings are rarely countenanced. For instance, a bridge over the river Var, and a highway from Nizza to Genoa, would save travellers the trouble of passing the Alps; and make them prefer such a road, which would be far more commodious, and contribute to render Nizza still more flourishing.

This

This city is a great deal visited by the English, and besides the commerce in silk, the residence of those travellers is the chief resource of its inhabitants. Notwithstanding this, the conveniency of such affluent guests is little consulted, though they often reside here six months, nay some for whole years, for the benefit of their health. There are no private furnished lodgings to be got, and strangers are forced to rent whole houses, destitute of all furniture. The fine climate of the country is mostly owing to the Alps, which border upon the sea, forming an amphitheatre, which encompasses the whole district, and keeps off the north winds.

In 1744 a battle was fought at a small distance from Nizza, between the united French and Spanish armies, and a large body of Sardinian troops posted upon steep heights. The allies were repulsed with the loss of four thousand men. Upon the Piedmontese peasants burying the
2 • dead;

dead, they found a great number of Spanish soldiers, that had been circumcised; this confirms the report, that Spain is still full of unknown jews, who are very numerous among all classes of people, and wear the mark of christians only for fear of the inquisition.

People usually entertain very unjust notions about the power of this state, and many newspaper writers, when the topic is about alliances, use to add the King of Sardinia, as requisite to preserve the balance among the powers of Europe; a prince, who without subsidies, and after having put a proper garrison in all his fortresses, has but a few thousand men to form a camp. This error proceeds from the predominant prejudice of the excellence of the Sardinian troops. A man of competent judgement will find them in fact, but little better than other Italian soldiers. They neither distinguish themselves by martial spirit, nor by high notions of honour,

nour, less still by manœuvres and the knowledge of the tactics, but by their exterior alone. They have a certain order and regularity unknown to the military of other Italian states: to this must be added punctual payment. The great number of fortresses are the natural causes of that order, which gave to many a traveller the highest notions of the military skill of the Piedmontese, especially when they compared them with their neighbours; this great number of fortresses makes also many an officer apply to, and excel in the art of fortification: yet all this cannot entitle the Sardinian troops, to whom I cannot deny courage, to the epithet of *excellent*; and I believe, that the whole army of his Sardinian Majesty, which does not exceed much twenty thousand men, would hardly dare to face long, and in the open field, the daily parade of Berlin. Many will look upon the expression of the parade of Berlin as a hyperbola. It would be unbecoming an author, who
aims

aims to be true in his judgements, to make use of figuratives in serious subjects, when a considerable state is the question. Therefore I declare to have written down the above expression after a mature deliberation. The reader ought only to know what the parade of Berlin consists of: it makes the greatest part of the most numerous garrison in Europe, which is daily assembled in a great number of detachments. Those detachments, if united, present a considerable corps, which in point of numbers alone, might have decided in former ages, the fate of whole provinces upon the field of battle. The garrison itself consists of those select regiments, whom all nations unanimously declare the best warriors in the world.

So much for my justification, by which I endeavour to make it appear, that I have not undervalued the army of the king of Sardinia, which however regular, is at present unaccustomed to war,

war, and in many respects deficient in military accomplishments. Notwithstanding, this monarch is a considerable ally for any prince who is engaged in war in the northern parts of Italy; in spite of the smallness of his army, he is not easy to be overcome, on account of the great number of fortresses in the country, which will often frustrate, to a conqueror, all the advantages he may have gained in the open field; it is these fortresses which render the king of Sardinia the most formidable prince of Italy, but this is nothing in the balance of political Europe. In spite of the small number of the Sardinian troops, there were seventy generals among them about four years ago.

Though the title of a King implies a much dignified meaning, it does not add the smallest increase to his power, which solely depends upon the value of his states. The kingdom of Sardinia of itself, fetches hardly any thing to the royal treasure, as
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SECT. IV. PARMA AND PLACENZA. 117

its small revenues will hardly reach to defray the civil and military exigencies. The same is to be said of Savoy, so that every thing comes from Piedmont; hence it may be said, that the duke maintains the king. The revenues of this country are very considerable, but not so much as to enable the king to act a part of his own upon the political theatre of Europe. The royal revenues in general do not exceed five millions of rix dollars, and the population of Piedmont does not quite amount to 15,00,000 souls.

PARMA AND PLACENZA.

THE fertility so peculiar to all Lombardy is also to be met with in the duchies of Parma and Placenza, situated in the centre of the country. Neither population nor industry are very great here, but the Spanish money is the more abundant.

dant. What distinguishes Parma are the master-pieces of Corregio, which embellish the altars and palaces. Proud of the works of that great artist, the people of this town do not care to shine in other arts, and architecture is greatly neglected. He that considers this city for its antiquity, extent, population, and as the residence of a prince, must be astonished to find so small a number of palaces and churches, which are so numerous throughout Italy.

The celebrated opera house of this place is the study of all architects, for it has the very peculiar property, that every word spoken at the greatest distance of its enormous circumference, is heard in every part of the audience with equal loudness. The rules of sound, with which we are still but little acquainted, cannot have been the guide of the master who built this house; it may not, therefore, be wrong to suppose, that some latent accidental cause has produced this effect. It
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is incontestably the largest theatre in Europe, but the extraordinary expences requisite for acting a play, has not made it serve its purpose for these forty years and upwards.

The want of stately edifices in Parma is most abundantly made up in the so thinly populated city of Placenza. It is, without contradiction, the finest of all Lombardy. No one will look upon it as a provincial town, but hold it to be the residence of some great monarch. The house of Farnese, which formerly resided here with kingly splendor, left every where behind traces of its love of arts and magnificence. Here we see long and wide streets filled with superb palaces and public edifices, and squares embellished with fountains. Upon the principal square there are two equestrian statues of the famous general Alexander Farnese, and his son Ranuccio, admired by every connoisseur, as master-pieces of art. The churches

are also replete with the productions of great masters, such as Carrache, Guerchino, and others.

It was in the vicinity of this town, that the famous cardinal Alberoni spent in retirement the latter part of his life, after having acted so shining a part in Europe.

F E R R A R A.

A TRAVELLER is terrified, when upon leaving the town of Lombardy he enters Ferrara, which belongs to the pope. This large and well-built place appears as if its inhabitants had been swept away by some pestilential scourge. It is full of beautiful palaces, and elegant public edifices, but all desolate. It might be well to write upon the gates, *this town is to be let*. History tells us, that it was
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formerly in a flourishing state of population, but now there remains but the buildings. The sight of people is rare, and hundreds of houses stand empty; it would be difficult to find a more cogent proof of the fatal consequences of a bad government. Travellers seldom stay long, but haste away as soon as they have paid their tribute of reverence to the memory of the immortal poet Ariosto, whose tomb is here. Tasso too wrote his excellent poem in this place. Thus Ferrara can boast of the enviable honour, that two extraordinary poems, reserved for immortality, took birth within her walls.

The inhabitants, not excluding the lowest plebeian, have the liberty of wearing a sword. This egregious prerogative makes all journeymen exercise themselves in fencing, hence Ferrara supplies all neighbouring provinces with fencing-masters.

B O L O G N A.

NOT far from here lays Bologna, a city in a much better condition, because its government is not quite papal. This great and populous place is remarkable as the only one in all Europe, which maintains a republican form of government under a sovereign prince.* The power of the Roman legate, who resides here as governor, with a great deal of splendor, and has life guards, and a court of his own, is very much circumscribed, because almost every thing depends upon the senate. The latter send their ambassador to Rome, who has the same prerogatives as the ministers of other powers. The situation of the city of Bologna, and its great

* Neufchatel cannot in the least be compared to it by persons who are acquainted with the constitution of this principality.

distance from the territories of the pope, are the causes of her enjoying her own liberties, which the pope cannot take away.— He would be as little able to secure himself the possession of Ferrara, should the house d'Este expose its well-founded pretensions to this principality.

The nobility are very numerous here, because those popes who were natives of Bologna, created ever so many princes, marquisses, and counts of their native place. In few European cities people live so extravagantly. It may be said, that Bologna is the staple of sensual pleasures, of music and devotion; because the latter paired with superstition is inseparable in Italy from a dissolute course of life. Each street-corner has an altar, each altar an image, and each image works its miracles. This, as well as many other cities in Lombardy, has covered porticos on both sides of the streets; though they keep off the sun and rain, they, however,

cause a deal of mischief: they deform the streets and make them narrow, hide the beauties of architecture, which are lost to the eye, and on that account the middle pavement is totally neglected, and filled with a perpetual mud. The porticos likewise turn out very dangerous during night, in such towns as are not lighted, and give free play to murderers and robbers. The former are more frequently to be met with than the latter. I have taken pains to search the cause of this, it being the case all over Italy, a country where poverty presses so hard, and where banditti may be hired for a trifle.— There is no other reason, but because the thief and robber, by his father confessor, is strongly exhorted to make restitution of the stolen property, and suspended from absolution till such time as he has made it; whereas the assassin, whether sentenced to die, or to the galleys, or set at liberty, receives, without any difficulty, and in the best form, a free remission of
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the most heinous crime that sullies human nature.

Bologna has a great treasure of paintings, and other works of art; but the palaces and churches have but little to engage attention. The best, if compared to those of Rome, Florence, Genoa, and Venice, are downright bad; except that of St. Petronius, in which the famous meridian of Cassini may be seen, and which was again repaired about the middle of this century. Bologna is the mart of all Italian musicians, castratos, and comedians, out of employ. Application is made hither from all countries, for people of that description. The musical performances in churches are very frequent here. The Bolognese theatres can be reckoned among the best in Italy, and are the cheapest in Europe.

Bologna boasts of being the most ancient university in Europe, and of possessing men of greater learning than Pa-

dua, Pavia, and Sienna: I shall not enter into the merits of this pretension. The better sort of people in Bologna are reputed as more addicted to reading of books than other Italians. Bologna derived its greatest splendor in our times from the three sisters Zanotti, who were all poetesses, and from the celebrated Laura Bassi, who at the early age of eighteen, received the doctor's hat, and read lectures.

The establishment which goes by the name of the Bolognese Institute, and is so much extolled in Italy, consists of a vast collection of what belongs to each science or art in particular. It is properly speaking a Cyclopædia of the senses. The library contains rare things, the principal of which consist in folios of natural history, wherein the productions of the three reigns of nature are masterly painted in colours. To it belongs also a cabinet of natural history, an astronomical observatory,

tory, an anatomical theatre, and all kinds of models of art, &c.

Pope Lambertini, a Bolognese, who died in 1758, is the founder of this Museum, and neither spared money nor pains to complete it: his intention was not only to do a good service to the university, but even to bring it into a most flourishing state. This intention was certainly excellent; but a great deal more is required to spread knowledge, or rather to plant it in a soil where it cannot thrive. A modern writer very ingeniously observes, that the tree of science has a quite different growth from the trees in a pleasure garden. In Bologna this outward show is a real bauble; nor did ever sage step forth from this scientific Trojan horse.

The river Rubicon, so famous in the history of Rome, runs here between the towns of Ravenna and Rimini; but its present name is Pisatello.

Under a wise government Ancona might be the greatest trading town in Italy, as it formerly was one of the chief cities in Europe. There are many traces left of her former importance, and it is still very commercial; but all this is nothing, compared to Ancona in her ancient state. It is the only town belonging to the pope, that has a certain number of manufactures. Here we find a peculiar industry and activity, to which southern Italy is a stranger: the nobility are not ashamed to follow commerce, and the richest families of the country are also the richest merchants. The very jews, who are so poor in Rome, and live as it were in a prison, do distinguish themselves here by opulence, and enjoy great liberties. This industry, so advantageous for the papal treasure, caused Ancona to be declared a free port, which happened about fifty years ago. The city contains still a great number of antiquities, among which is the marble dike, erected in the harbour.

harbour by order of the Roman Emperor Trajan; in the middle stands the well-known triumphal arch of that prince, which has been tolerably well preserved.

L O R E T T O.

LORETTO presents the singular spectacle of a considerable city, wholly maintained by ~~super~~superstition. The enormous number of pilgrims and travellers, who visit the Holy House, the great number of dealers in relics, the merchants of rosaries and scapularies, furnish the means of subsistence to the indigent inhabitants of this place, who would otherwise starve amidst all the riches heaped up here. There are shops where images and medals of the Virgin are sold, which, in the opinion of the devotees, derive a peculiar virtue from having touched the Holy House. I shall not enter into a descrip-

tion of the so called Holy House, it being a theme exhausted by other travellers, as well as the visitors, who drag themselves about upon their knees, a scene so strange to a travelling protestant. But these good people are rewarded for their trouble by the pleasing devout sensations which the Holy House excites in them, and which often manifest themselves in tears of joy, to which a common observer is certainly a stranger.

A great German princess,* who travelled in Italy about fourteen years ago, fell also, upon visiting the Holy House, into a fit of mystic sentiments; she communicated it to her lady in waiting, who being a most accomplished woman did not find herself pleased in a cavern whose air was filled with the evaporations of devout crowds, and impregnated with the smoke of a great number of lamps: however

* Mary Theresa, late queen of Hungary, mother to the late emperor Joseph II.

the Holy House fostered most surprisingly the pious faith of that illustrious visitor, who having a sore leg some years after, had her wounds dressed not only with proper plaisters, but also little images were applied, to which she ascribed a peculiar virtue for having touched the holy chimney of Loretto.

The treasures are kept here in a great magnificent hall in large presses. I must premise, that several of the precious jewels offered to the Virgin have been prudently changed; nevertheless the great number of real jewels remaining, besides immense loads of gold and silver, form still an enormous treasure, perhaps the greatest which devotion did ever amass upon the globe. Prudent and resolute pirates would have no great difficulties to encounter, in fetching away these riches. It is really inconceivable that the corsairs of Barbary have never made an attempt of this kind. The city has a garrison of

500 paltry sham soldiers, prepared for no defence, and whose resistance, if the attack was made by night, would avail nothing. There are, however, signals to bring the whole country into motion, in similar emergencies; but this precaution would also prove fruitless. If the business were conducted with requisite prudence and expedition, I maintain that the enterprize would not fail; and that the preservation of the treasures at Loretto is only due to ignorance in geography, a science to which the barbarian pirates are utter strangers. Should ever the English take it into their heads to commence hostilities with the holy See, their privateers would surely find the way to the holy house of Loretto, which lies at a very small distance from the sea, and nothing would be more easy than to make a descent in armed sloops.

S E C T. V.

FLORENCE.—*Nobility.—Army.—Navy.—Theatre.—Language.—Literature.—National conceit.—Arts.—Gallery.—Florentine waxworks and anatomical preparatives.—Palace of Pitti.—Public edifices.—Pisa.—Cathedral.—Hanging tower.—Holy churchyard.—Algarotti's epitaph.—Bridge.—Baths.—University.—Sienna.—Leghorn.—Trade.—Project of rebuilding the temple of Jerusalem.—Russians at Leghorn, and their conduct.—An anecdote never printed before, relating to a most extraordinary adventure.—Quarantine.—Coffee houses.—Special hospitality.*

TUSCANY, under the present government, is the happiest country in Italy. Wise laws, a flourishing commerce,

merce, and an increasing cultivation under a fair climate: but the Tuscans are far from being sensible of their happiness. How much does not their prince excel the best of the house of Medicis! though he is not attended by so brilliant a train of arts as Cosmus in his immortal century, he nevertheless surpasses him by his extensive knowledge and his zealous care for the welfare of his people, which are his passions. Future generations will reap the fruits of his excellent establishments and laws, and erect monuments in their hearts to the wisdom of Leopold.* It is remarkable, that this prince, only a few years since, knows and values the fine arts: entirely occupied with the government of his state, and the useful arts and sciences, he looked upon his precious gallery with indifference; he made no disposition to its advantage, nor honoured it with visits, except such as were ex-

* Now emperor of Germany and king of Hungary.

acted by etiquette in the presence of illustrious guests. This coldness made often sigh the lover of arts, and appeared strange to travellers. For instance, the groupe of Niobe with her children, so much admired, which was taken in 1771 from the palace of Medicis at Rome, and brought to Florence, had been standing for many years in the palace of Pitti, in a mean room, among old furniture, and waited long for a worthier place: at last it obtained one, when the fate of the fine arts took a better turn in Florence. The grand duke, by fresh acquirements of knowledge, has probably learned the high value of arts, being but shortly become their most zealous promoter.

The notion of seeing an uncommonly fine city, a notion with which travellers come usually to Florence, deceives those whose expectations are too sanguine, and who have seen others. It is impossible that a man of sound judgment, who
knows

knows Europe as a traveller, can speak with excessive admiration of the beauty of this city, which, though deserving all praise, is, however, not matchless. It is not the number of fine statues dispersed through it, but injudiciously placed, and of course lost to the eye, which make alone the beauty of a town. The so much boasted large free stone pavement is good, yet greatly inferior in point of commodiousness to that of the London streets; nay not better than in Venice, Genoa, and other towns of Italy. Here are no great and wide streets, no splendid palaces; in short, no striking façades of edifices, except a few, viz. the cathedral, the *Batisterio*, in which all the children of the town are christened, some other churches, and a fine bridge upon the river Arno: if we add to this the statues above mentioned, we have traced all the beauty of Florence. The great square before the old palace of the grand duke (*palazzo vecchio*) is the most un-
seemly

seemly of all, notwithstanding the many fine statues and groups that stand upon it; and form a most disagreeable contrast with that mean Gothic mass. The remainder of the square is beset with private houses and the so called *Loggia*, which is destined as a place of meeting for merchants. Under the arcades are exposed some of the noblest productions of the chissel. The prospect of Florence is not fine, take it from what side you please, even including the terraces of the gardens of Boboli, which command a view upon the city. The adjacent landscapes are, however, charming, chiefly that which lends the eye to the valley of the Arno; is full of hillocks and vineyards; but the town shares but little of that prospect. This, this is Florence, that wondrous beautiful city, of which one of her grand dukes used to say, that it should be shewn to strangers on sundays only. Such a gasconade may have taken in the sixteenth century, when Italy saw the arts

arts in the cradle in all neighbouring countries, and the finest towns in Europe were filled with wooden houses. But the times are materially changed.

Although the Florentine nobles have been rich in the times of the first Medici, they are now poor. In those times they applied to commerce, which alone brought the state to such a pitch of greatness; but long since this source of wealth has been despised; and a Florentine nobleman would think himself lost of honour, were he to follow the great Cosmus and the late duke, who amassed considerable treasures in following commercial concerns. It might be supposed that the richer part of this nobility would at least advance money to the trade of Leghorn, which offers such great emoluments; nevertheless a similar occurrence was unheard of even a few years ago; yet they will enter into partnership with retailers in Florence, and are so con-
descending

descending as to sell wine by bottles in their own palaces. The expences of the nobility, though not very shining, are by no means proportionate to their income. There has been a project on the carpet to reform luxury, and if it be true, that luxury enriches a great state and ruins a small one, similar laws will not fail producing the most favourable effects in this country.

In order to remedy this evil, the grand duke adopted very prudent means in 1782. They did not consist in laws, but in proclamations addressed to his people, and followed by his own example. Nobody, as he expresses himself, will be more welcome at his court, than in a common decent attire; he has laid this down as a maxim, in promotions to offices and dignities. He recommends the rich to show their splendor, in encouraging arts, manufactures, agriculture, and in performing good actions. Even the tribunals of Tuscany
re-

received wise mandates, the appearance of which was very extraordinary in such a country as Italy. The grand duke desires his courts, chiefly the criminal ones, not to decide too freely upon the liberties of men ; to show humanity in their examinations, and precautions in suffering oaths to be taken ; to proceed to trials as soon as possible, to mitigate the sufferings of the unhappy prisoners, and not to let them languish longer than necessary in their place of confinement. He has also hemmed the too extensive prerogatives of the chace, which he looks upon as a barbarous sport.

This praise-worthy prince had continually the weal of his subjects at heart, and it makes his dearest and most indefatigable concern. He promotes agriculture in various manners, has canals cleaned, dikes and highways made, which are much wanting still in this otherwise distinguished province. A new one is
now

now digging, which leads to Ancona, and another to Parma will soon be begun. It is a peculiar trait of the grand duke's, that he only lives upon his Austrian and Spanish private revenues, and uses those of Tuscany for the good of the country; they amount to about 2,400,000 rix dollars. The lottery makes a great branch of it, and fetches no less than 175,555 rix dollars per annum. On this account Leopold cannot suppress it, without weakening considerably the resources of the country, and suffering them to be enjoyed by the Genoese.

Tuscany is at present in no apprehension of a war, in which case it would not want for troops, but its present military establishment is very insignificant, for there are not quite two thousand men, and only one general; the navy consists of a couple of sloops of war, and three galleys to protect the harbour. A few years ago a militia has been established of the citizens of
- almost

almost every town in Tuscany, and the bands of Florence, Pisa, Sienna, and Arezzi, are upon a very good footing.

The grand duke is no particular friend to theatres, yet he prefers comedies to operas, and a French troop of comedians is sometimes ordered to act at Florence. This also happened at my last stay, in 1780. The company was as good as any to be found in the French provinces, but they acted before empty seats, and without the support of the prince and the liberalities of the nobility, would have been starved. The foolish custom to play at cards during the operas, is here as common as in other cities of Italy: the noise which it causes, and the continual rambling, from one box into another, annihilate frequently the pleasure of the other spectators whilst the best ariettas are sung. It is *bon ton* among the Italian ladies, to pay no attention to the plays, they leave this to the wives of the tradesmen.

men. Some even affect the greatest insensibility at the most beautiful songs, which are sung by the best fingers, and choose the moment when all is silence, to have a loud conversation. The ballets only, can make them less indifferent; their charms are irresistible and they will be attentive to them, should even the most insignificant dances be repeated for several days together. These ballets are very bad. As the pantomime is without caricature, and all the talents which form a great actor, utterly unknown in Italy, no expectation can therefore be formed from the Italian dances: In the comical parts their gestures are caricature, and in the serious nothing but grins. Their whole art is confined to jumps and indecent postures, but there are no traces of the art of dancing, of which Noverre has laid down so fine a theory, and confirmed it by admirable practice. These ballets last for whole hours, and the Italians cannot be tired with
seeing

seeing them. It is a pity that upon such mean amusements they lavish sometimes the most beautiful decorations, really worthy of admiration.

The ruling passion of the Florentines, as of all other Italians, is singing and buffoon tricks. They hate every sort of theatrical production, that requires thought, and put up with all that moves their gross senses. During my stay, *Didone abbandonata*, (the forsaken Dido) written by Metastasio, was to be acted; but the first singer, who had the part of Dido, was suddenly taken ill, this did not hinder the performance of the opera: Dido was left out, and they acted Dido without Dido. If the opinion of a certain philosopher be true, who says, that, in order to learn to know a nation, one ought only to examine their theatre, we cannot form a very advantageous opinion of the Italians.

Love

The love of poetry is a characteristic trait of the Tuscans, it was transmitted to them by their ancestors; there are also more *improvvisatori*, (extempore poets) to be met with here than in any other province of Italy. The poem of Dante was sung by the common people in the streets of Florence, while that poet was alive. It may also be said to the credit of the Tuscans, that they have more improved in agriculture, than all other Italians.

The Tuscan language, especially at Sienna, is looked upon as the best in Italy. This province having produced the best writers, and having been most conducive to the improvement of the language, the inhabitants make all their neighbours sensible of that superiority. Though the Tuscans are imitated in their style, their affected pronunciation is quite left to themselves. It is remarkable, that this fancied beauty is not imitated by any Italian province. But there is a known proverb: *Lingua*

Toscana in bocca Romana (The Tuscan language in the Roman mouth). Among other defects with respect to pronunciation, the Tuscans never found the *c*, but change it into an *b*; e. gr. *cavallo* they will pronounce *havallo*; *chiefa*, *biefa*, &c. It sounds as if the speaker had lost his uvula. This affectation is very ancient, and was used by the Florentines even in the times of Dante, who says in his celebrated poem, that by this defect the souls in the other world had known his countrymen.

As the Italians are no travellers, nay as they seldom visit the adjacent provinces of their peninsula, it will account for their several different dialects, which are not only preserved by the people of quality, but become daily more sanctioned, as there are even authors who write poems in them. There are now five complete translations of Tasso's *Jerusalem delivered*, written in five confounded lingos of
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gibberish, viz. those that are spoke at Venice, Bergamo, Bologna, Milan, and Naples; I shall not mention comedies, which are found in all the provincial dialects.

No country has wrought more at the perfection of language than Italy, yet this country, which has produced so many excellent poets, cannot show a single elegant prosaic writer. Algarotti, the Venetian, is looked upon as the best model in Italian prose; but how much inferior is that author in his style, to the prosaic writers of England, France, and Germany? *The Academia della Crusca* of this place is also a fresh proof of the inutility of such societies of language. It could not go farther than the French academy of Paris.

There are numbers of learned productions published here, but they are so pedantical and tasteless, as if they had been writ-

ten in the middle age and not in the eighteenth century. Old classical editions are often reprinted with commentaries and notes, which is an incontestable proof of the small degree of learning among the Tuscans. At present they have no poets, but a numberless set of sonnetteers. I have mentioned above the book-trade, which was once very flourishing here. Sometimes Italian books are published at Florence and Parma, printed with great typographical beauty, but they are printed at the expence of the duke, or under his protection, and cannot be adduced as an argument of the flourishing state of the book trade, the justest scale to weigh the cultivation of a nation in our times.

Thus the Italians, who neither travel nor read, nor understand other European languages, must naturally be in a state of decline, and it becomes obvious, that this very state is concealed from them.

Sher-

Sherlock took it upon him to teach them better in 1777. Being sufficiently versed in the Italian language, he wrote a book, in which he cleared up the present state of their literature, and gave them the most convincing proofs of their want of taste and gross ignorance.

The great names of a Shakspeare, a Richardson, a Cope, and many others, appeared, for the first time, praised in an Italian book. It made an uncommon figure, but the Italians were far from improving by its contents, quite on the contrary, they wrote against it in the most virulent style, and Sherlock was honoured with the general epithet of *il matto Inglese*, (the mad Englishman).* There was only one Italian gentleman in Rome, Mr. Bianconi, who took up his pen in Sherlock's defence, finding his censures to be well founded.

* The English reader knows well that Bishop Sherlock was a native of Ireland: it is common to foreigners to miss this distinction. *Translator.*

The high opinion which the Italians conceive of the province in which they are born, borders even upon ridicule. Every one looks upon his little country as the most beautiful spot in the four parts of the world. And whatever well grounded or false arguments can support their sottish conceit, are propagated by tradition. This is the case from the Roman town to the Luccanian. Thus it will not appear strange, if the Florentines, who distinguish themselves in so many other points, endeavour, if possible, to outdo all other Italians by their ostentatious gaffconades. These find every where nothing but barbarism and rude manners, they alone are accomplished, invented, and brought all to perfection. The great men of all other nations are in their opinion far inferior to their countrymen ; they maintain these and many such like absurdities.

The Florentines cannot complain of want of encouragement, yet, notwithstanding

standing this, and many other means of perfection offered to artists in the great gallery, in the private collections of art, the statues in the streets and churches, their progress in the arts is very slender. Nothing is easier obtained than permissions to draw in the palaces, and to copy the great master-pieces of art. The corridors of the great gallery, full of antique statues and paintings, are open all day long to every body, and filled with artists at work. The only art which is brought here to a high degree of perfection, is the Florentine Mosaic, which is made no where but in Florence. Notwithstanding the beauty, perfect imitation of nature, and striking characteristic of these stone paintings, the artists employed in this branch are classed very low, and looked upon as common mechanics. They make landscapes, fruits, and sea-scenes, which enrapture the eye, and cannot be excelled by the pencil: but these works being very dear, they only make small pieces, but upon or-

der they will copy the largest landscapes. Historical paintings are beyond the sphere of this art, and reserved to the Roman *Mosaic*, which differs from the Florentine, because in the former they use large stones, and in the latter very small ones.

The grand duke's gallery is the greatest ornament of Florence, and proves, what a series of princes, if lovers of art, are able to collect. Had it not been for a particular clause, annexed to the will of the last prince of the house of Medicis, this magnificent collection would have been brought to Vienna, when Francis I. took possession of Tuscany, but on that account the whole has remained in Florence; even the great quantity of silver and gold vases, which are kept in the palace, and were left by Cosmus II. have not been touched, however necessary those treasures would have been to the court of Vienna, during her long wars. This magnificent gallery is the only one of its kind, and never has a single build-

building united so many various productions of art. Among the collection of antique statues, however valuable, there is but one of them capital, viz. the Venus of Medicis.

How little therefore can this collection be compared to the Clementine Museum. Some connoisseurs will even prefer the collection of antiquities of villa Borghese and the Capitol, to that of Florence. The same may be observed about the paintings, which are superior both in value and number to ever so many galleries in Europe. The most beautiful picture at Florence, called *ma donna della Sedia*, by Raphaël, is not in the gallery, but in the palace of Pitti, the residence of the grand duke.

What distinguishes the gallery of Florence from all others in Europe, are two rooms full of portraits of the greatest masters, painted by themselves: their num-

ber amounts to above two hundred. That of Mengs is the last that has been sent; it is larger than any one in the collection, and he himself chose its place. Batoni, at Rome, was requested to send his, but that artist will not work without money. Upon expressing to him my surprise at not having seen his portrait in the gallery of Florence, he answered: "I have no time for such work, if they will pay me, it shall be done."

The late electress of Saxony, a princess proficient in poetry, painting, and music, offered her portrait to the duke while resident here, and afterwards sent it from Germany painted by herself. She does not parade as an electress, but as a painter, with the pencil in hand: the frame of the portrait is, however, adorned with a large crown. To this gallery belongs a collection of Etrurian and other antique vases; also several utensils of the ancients, and the artificial wax-works: some of them
repre-

represent all the parts of the human body anatomically, and with great illusion; they are very instructive for artists and physicians, nay, for every thinking head. Part of these excellent wax-works have lately been brought to Vienna, where they are exposed, with equal splendor and taste, in the Imperial college of surgery. As this art has been always much promoted in that capital by Joseph II. every preparative to render it more flourishing, is received with the greatest admiration. The learned professor Hunczowsky has greatly improved and enlarged the Florentine invention. He has imitated in wax several members of the human body, with wounds and other ailments, and thus exposed them to the pupils, in order to demonstrate, when an operation should be made and when not. It is a gallery of diseases, which, by the great abilities of the above experienced professor, conveys illusion to the eye, and the best instruction to the mind.

The most precious productions are kept in a place called *Tribuna*, which is the Holy of Holies of this temple of arts. This *Tribuna* forms a very elegant closet, of a round or rather octagonal form, with a roof in shape of a dome, which receives the light: here are the select pieces of the gallery—The Venus of Medicis, with five other ancient statues, several pictures by Raphael, an excellent Madonna by Corregio, a Venus by Titian, and several more. In 1780 some alterations were made in the structure of the *Tribuna*, with regard to the inner parts of the gallery, and the works were carried on with the greatest alacrity. Leopold was often present himself, and encouraged the workmen. His attention was chiefly engrossed by a spacious saloon, destined for the reception of the group of Niobé. This saloon will be the most magnificent in all Europe. The gallery itself has received additional rooms, and the grand duke ordered all his rare paintings to be

brought hither from his palaces and castles. As the digging of antiquities was formerly attended with many difficulties, he has now removed them, and enacted a law for the encouragement of those who embark in similar undertakings.

Pitti palace is the residence of the grand duke's family. It still bears the name of Pitti, the first proprietor, who had it built in the fifteenth century; but, ruined by the expences, was forced to sell it again to the house of Medicis, who aggrandized it considerably. Alberti, who descended from a noble Tuscan family, was the architect. This artist, who followed in his works the principles of Vitruvius, and studied with unremitting diligence the monuments of Greece and Rome, was the first among the moderns, who wrote upon architecture; he also wrote Latin treatises on painting and statuary.

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The palace, which lies upon an eminence, is not great but fine, magnificently furnished, and beautified with paintings *in fresco*. Paintings are very numerous here, and partly more valuable than those in the gallery. Here is also the above-mentioned truly admirable picture of *Madonna della Sedia*, representing Mary with her infant in a sitting posture; it is not above twenty inches, but the pencil of Raphael has displayed such a force in this enrapturing and striking image, as will bewitch even those who know nothing of the art.

Behind the palace are the spacious gardens; they mostly consist of terraces, embellished with fountains. These are all the beauties of the gardens, which are much neglected. Here, well dressed people may walk about. It was here also I met with the famous pretender, who lived in Florence for several years, in a most private and retired manner. He never went

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to court, and renounced all company, as he pretended to a royal title, which nobody would give him. This unsatisfied ambition drove him from Rome, where his family lived beloved and pitied for so many years, and where cardinal York, his brother, was much esteemed. Before he married, many of the Roman nobles gave him the title of *vostra Maestà* (your Majesty), but when he presented to them his spouse, who was born countess of Stolberg, as his queen, the Roman ladies were provoked; he received several affronts, left Rome, and came to Florence.

The cathedral is as striking for its magnitude as for the coloured marble with which it is covered. It is a worthy monument of pristine republican splendor. The same may be observed of the building where all the children are baptized, which is situated near the cathedral: the doors are of metal, and divided into small spaces,

spaces, representing scriptural subjects drawn from the history of the church, and the Roman legend, all executed in a most superior and inimitable stile. Michael Angelo was so great an admirer of these doors, that he used to say, they deserved to be the doors of paradise. I have nowhere in Italy seen such detached buildings serving for the purpose of christening children, except in Tuscany.

P I S A.

Pisa cannot be seen without emotion. A city so ancient, once opulent, powerful, and populous, now sunk so deep, as to become a poor provincial town in a petty state. The circumference of this city is very considerable, and occupies at present as much ground as it did when the seat of a flourishing and warlike commonwealth; but its population amounts only to

to eighteen thousand souls, which makes the streets empty and desolate, and many of them are overgrown with grass. This want of population causes several hundreds of houses to be uninhabited, and such as are inhabited pay a very low rent. Provisions are cheap, and luxury is very inconsiderable. Many poor noble families reside here to hinder the total ruin of the place. Notwithstanding all this poverty, plays are acted all the year round, and during the carnival they give magnificent operas. It was lucky for Pisa, that the Russian Count Orlov made it his headquarters in the last war with the Turks. Leghorn being the only port in the Mediterranean where the Russian fleet could be provided with every thing, the Russians always returned hither when they came back from their cruizes and expeditions; but as the Count liked Pisa better than Leghorn, on account of the nobility, he made it his chief residence during the whole war. The staff-officers followed his

his example, especially in winter. The distance being only two leagues, they all resorted to Pisa, which then enjoyed such abundance, as is still felt by the inhabitants.

Pisa is one of the most ancient towns of Italy. Even in Strabo's time it was a very important maritime city; it was then situated on the sea, which has since receded: this recession of the sea is common to all those great shores of Italy, where the rivers flow into either of the seas which environ them. Many assert that the Appenine mountains become lower every century, and that their earth, which is led by the rivers into the sea, aggrandizes Italy by degrees.

If we enter Pisa from Massa Carrara, or the Genoese side, the space before the cathedral presents itself directly to sight, and is quite overgrown with grass. There are but few houses in the environs, and there
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is hardly a soul to be seen, except on Sundays and holidays. It resembles an enchanted spot, and the elegant buildings form a most magnificent group, and entrance with admiration. The cathedral, with its metal gates, like that of Florence, the house of baptism, the hanging tower, the holy church-yard (*Campo Santo*) all these stand in the middle of the turf, and have the appearance of a large village. Several edifices unite the most beautiful ornaments of architecture to grandeur and majestic appearance ; and the hanging tower is the most elegant in Italy.

The cathedral was built in 1016, by Boschetto de Dulichio, a Greek architect, almost entirely of Greek ruins. Its in and out sides are covered with marble, which the natives of Pisa fetched from the Levant at the most flourishing epoch of their trade: they traded in those times to all the islands of the Mediterranean and Archipelago, besides the coasts of Asia Minor,

Minor, Syria, Egypt, and Africa. The church has one hundred large windows, which light the inside; the outside is decorated with a vast number of pillars great and small. It is the finest piece of Gothic architecture in Italy. A great number of granite columns, which support that great pile, are executed by Greek masters in a most elegant stile: some are of one piece of granite, and some even of porphery. One pillar, nine feet long, consists of the latter valuable stone, and stands before the high altar.

The baptism edifice, and the hanging tower, are also embellished with Greek ruins. There remains no doubt of this fine tower having actually given way. The ridiculous prejudice of its having been built hanging is sufficiently contradicted; for it is visible that the lower pillar and the threshold are both sunk, otherwise the small pillars upon the left would have been shorter.

shorter. The stones are so well hewn, and the materials so good, that it has remained in this situation for these six centuries. If a perpendicular line is drawn from its summit down to the ground, the distance from the lower part of the tower is fifteen feet. It has eight stories, and is 188 feet high. They say that this hanging edifice helped the great Galilæus to make an exact calculation of the fall of bodies.

The holy church-yard, or *Campo Santo*, is a great large square encompassed with high walls, painted by Ghiotto, Ghiottino, Stephano, Buffalmaco, and other famous masters, who flourished soon after the revival of the art of painting: they are all scriptural subjects. These walls encompass a small field, whose earth has been dug in the vicinity of the holy sepulchre of Jerusalem: it was done during the crusades, in which the people of Pisa were also concerned. What every body brought

brought relics from Palestine to Europe, the Pisanese took it into their heads to render their city glorious by so hallowed a spot. Thus their ships carried warriors and arms to the holy land, and instead of riches, which might have been expected, they brought back wounded soldiers and earth. He that wishes to be buried in the holy ground must deem it a great honour, and put himself to a great expence. A most magnificent mausoleum in this *Campo Santo* is sacred to the memory of Count Algarotti, who died here in 1765. The late king of Prussia had it erected to his learned friend, the same as he honoured the ashes of the Marquis d'Argens, at Aix in Provence. Frederick the Great wrote the epitaph himself, which, though laconic, is highly expressive. The traveller will read — *Algarotti Ovidii aemulo, Newtoni Discipulo, Fridericus*. The king kept up correspondence with him till he died, and had he recovered, he would have paid another visit to his royal friend.

fiend. One division of this burial ground consists of a particular sort of earth, which, I was informed, consumes the corpse within the space of nine days.

Besides the above-mentioned productions of architecture, Pisa possesses also other fine public edifices and palaces. I must not omit mentioning an elegant marble bridge which is built over the river Arno, whereupon those notorious annual combats were given, which, to the great mortification of all classes of Pisanese plebeians, have been suppressed by the present reigning duke.

Within half an hour's walk from Pisa there are warm baths, much visited by the Italians, especially since the grand duke has ordered them to be repaired. Here reigns an order, cleanliness, and commodity, rarely to be met with in other parts of Italy. The road to the baths leads along the magnificent aqueduct, a beautiful
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monument of the ancients. The district about Pisa is, in general, very attractive, and surpasses in this all the cities of Tuscany. As rich as this place is in excellent works of architecture, as poor is it with respect to fine paintings, and quite destitute of antique statues, there being not a single one.

Pisa has also an university, an observatory, a botanical garden, a cabinet of natural history, and a great number of professors. Nothing is heard of their labours; and however learned they may be in their respective branches, they are, notwithstanding, in a profound ignorance of what passes beyond the Alps. I spoke here with a book-making professor of mathematics, who had never read nor heard any thing of Leibnitz and Wolf. This gross ignorance, of which I have numberless instances, reigns throughout Italy; it chiefly arises from the Italians neglecting entirely the study of to learn the European languages.

SIENNA.

S I E N N A.

Pisa is more considerable than Sienna, which has also an university. This city is situate on the road from Florence to Rome; for this reason foreign passengers frequently stop there, yet without making any long stay. The ladies of this place are the handsomest in Tuscany; and the inhabitants boast of speaking the best Italian; yet I can by no means approve of their affected dialect. Their pretensions go even farther, and they will pass for the wittiest people of Italy, wherefore they endeavour to shew their wit by singular expressions. I saw a cavalier, conducting ladies, met by a foreign opera singer, who, upon paying his respects by a bow, received the following reciprocal salutation from the cavalier: "Your slave, Mr. *Accompagnier** of

* The translator apologizes for this unusual English expression; for was he to express it otherwise, the phrase would lose its singularity of ridicule.

“instruments!” This compliment excited a laugh, and put the amateur to the blush. Let the reader take this for a sample of Sinesian wit. The word *slave* is a common form of greeting in Italy. Our common expression of—Your most obedient, most humble servant, did not seem sufficient to the Italians to express their submission; they, for this reason, had recourse to the gallies, and fetched from thence a picture to trace their politeness. I shall forbear every reflection, which must naturally flow from such an observation.

The town of Sienna is large and well-built. The market place, which lies in a kind of depth and forms a basin, is of uncommon extent. Population is inconsiderable, and poverty as great, if not greater, than at Pisa. There are but few remains of the pristine flourishing state of this city. The cathedral, which was built in the twelfth century, is the chief

chief monument, and contains a set of most valuable pictures, and other productions of art. It is extremely spacious, and its outside, covered with black and white marble, forms a very majestic sight. Sienna had a code of laws and rules for its painters and artists as early as in the thirteenth century; they formed a society or club, had their presidents, and stood in great repute.

LEGHORN.

Leghorn convinces us what wonders may be performed, in a short time, through wise politic measures. An insignificant place, amidst a country full of sea-ports, and, above all, adjacent to a very rich town, which had once a most extensive trade, how little probable was it that it should rise, and surpass its proud neighbour in commerce! This

has, however, been the case, even without any extraordinary political revolution. When Amsterdam built its commercial hopes upon the decay of Antwerp, there were quite different efficient causes than there have been here between Leghorn and Genoa: it is the only commercial city in Italy whose affluence is increasing.* Its population amounts to 45,000 souls, and increases daily. From the first time I was here to the last, a space of six years had elapsed, and in so short an interval the improving state of this city was very perceptible. When the Genoese gave it up to the house of Medicis, it was a wretched unwholesome place, but it totally lost that bad quality, by increasing population, and to the despair of its former masters.

* The trade of Trieste is also in a progressive state. Though its inhabitants speak Italian, the place, however, as is well known, does not belong to Italy, but to Germany.

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As Leghorn is a new city, neither antiquities, nor modern works of architecture, such as magnificent churches and palaces, nor galleries, nor collections of statues, must be looked for here : they are reserved to future times. Instead of them the traveller will find great industry, manufactures, and shipping. No harbour in the Mediterranean, not excepting Marseilles, is so much resorted to as this. The government make all possible exertions to favour and protect the trade. It boasts of commercial freedom, treaties with the states of Barbary, East India concerns, great toleration, and good mercantile regulations.

The jews enjoy uncommon liberties in this city, which abounds with them : they follow all trades, and have manufactures of corals, surpassing all others in Europe. It is worth while to mention here a singular project, for the execution of which real pains have been taken : — Some

German officers who served on board the Russian fleet during the last war with the Turks, and were personally acquainted with the famous Ali-Bey, agreed with several jews of this place, to propose to that fortunate rebel to give up Jerusalem to them, which city he was master of at that time : his love of riches being insatiable, he consented, but he required very large sums, and the assistance of Russia in his succeeding enterprizes. As it was advantageous for the Russian empire to see her powerful enemy weakened, secret subsidies were promised to Ali, and the jews, who already formed splendid projects, flattered themselves to have them guaranteed by the first cabinets of Europe ; they even dreamt of rebuilding the temple of Jerusalem, and wrote about the matter to their Hebrew brethren in England and Holland. The stipulated sums were the least object, and who knows how far this singular plan might have been carried,

carried, had not suddenly the death of Ali put an end to those secret transactions.

The long stay of the Russian fleet in this harbour, where they were supplied with all necessaries, and whither they conducted the prizes they made, was so highly beneficial to Leghorn, that it granted the greatest indulgence to the Russians. The latter were so sensible of that indulgence, as to emancipate themselves by committing misdemeanours, which in no country would have remained unrevenged. The following trait will prove it:—The dog of a Russian officer, who followed his master into the town, lost himself at the guard-posted near the town gates, and run among the firelocks, which caused a certain confusion. It was compatible with the duty of the centry to drive away the animal, which he accordingly did by an ungentle motion of his foot. The Russian, offended at this treatment of his dog, fell, cane in hand, upon

the Tuscan centry, and beat him most mercileſſly. The cries of the ſufferer put into motion all the guards and their officer, who endeavoured to ſave the ſoldier from the rage of the aſſailant ; but this only increaſed the fury of the Ruſſian, who took meaſure upon the Tuscan gentleman with the ſame wooden inſtrument. What was moſt ſingular in this accident, is its having had no farther conſequences.

A far more remarkable event happened here in March, 1775. A Ruſſian lady, of natural birth, but deſcended from the moſt illuſtrious blood of that empire, had remained two years in Rome, where ſhe lived in the greateſt indigence and obſcurity. In that ſituation ſhe cannot have thought of turning her eyes upon a throne ; ſhe was prudent, fair, and bleſt with the ſweeteſt temper. Her modeſt courſe of life was ſoon hemmed, by a Ruſſian officer delegated for that purpoſe, who made her perſonally a moſt extraordinary

dinary proposal, to which he gave a still greater weight, by offering a considerable sum. The latter argument had its desired effect upon her necessitous situation. The lady suffered herself to be prevailed on, and came to Pisa, in the beginning of 1775, where she was received like a queen by count Alexis Orlov, the Russian admiral, who then resided there. He attended the lady to every place of fashion, and in the play-house shewed her such great marks of respect before the public, as astonished all the nobility. Nobody could conceive who was that lady, to whom the haughty count shewed so great a condescension. This lasted during the whole time of the carnival. At last a proposal was made to take a trip to the adjacent port of Leghorn: it was accepted, they alighted at the house of the English consul, and all was high life. At table the conversation fell upon the fleet, and as the lady had never seen a man of war, she readily agreed to visit one. Unfor-

fortunate woman ! how little did she suspect her fate ! she went into a boat with the count, and was brought to the destined ship. Here the scene changed, all of a sudden ; she was apprized of her captivity in a contemptible tone of voice, and her hands put into irons. The ship remained two days longer in port to take in a complete store of provisions for her voyage to Russia. No strange boat could come near, as the guards threatened to fire whenever a similar attempt was suspected. This, however, could not hinder the numerous boats of the people of Leghorn from drawing near enough to perceive the piteous object of their curiosity ; she came often to the cabbin window, where she gave visible signs of her despair. On the third day the ship sailed with her prey ; shortly after I arrived at Leghorn, and found the whole town in a state of indignation about this adventure : the court above all gave manifest tokens of its high displeasure.

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A propofal was made to Hakert, a painter at Rome, and a native of Brandenburg, to paint the Russian victories. As the burning of the Turkish fleet near Tſchefme was the principal exploit of that war, count Orlow had a ſhip ſet on fire in the port of Leghorn, to impreſs the painter's mind with more lively ideas. This was the real cauſe for burning the ſhip; but not the ridiculous motive, which is mentioned by many, that the count intended to treat his royal highneſs the duke of Glouceſter, then at Leghorn, with an extraordinary fire-work. A great number of painters came from all the provinces of Italy to behold that ſingular ſpectacle. Whether they ſaw much more than fire and ſmoak, or whether this ſcene was worth a long journey, remains a queſtion: it ſuffices to ſay, that Hakert painted the burning of the Turkish fleet, and other naval expeditions of the Ruſſians, and Catherine requited him with an imperial reward.

Though Leghorn has neither great palaces, nor magnificent churches, it does not want for elegant dwellings, most sumptuously furnished. Sir — Dyke, the English consul, has carried that luxury to a degree of extravagance, even unknown to Italian princes. His house, of uncommon extent, was then divided in summer and winter apartments, and each part, from the tapestry to the smallest utensil, was different, and most capriciously selected for each season. This refinement has been invented in France, though it has hitherto been little imitated in other countries. This peculiarity induced count Orlov to take up his residence in the house of the English knight, and to leave the victualling of the Russian fleet to his care. This important trust had been before in the hands of a German merchant, of the name of Frank, whose house is the most considerable in Leghorn, and to whom count Orlov was under particular obligations. The merchant

chant had also offered his fine house, but there being, unfortunately, no distinction in it between summer and winter apartments, Sir —— Dyke's got the preference ; upon this he got the victualling, and understood the business so well, that he cleared above a million of zechins by it. The disappointed Mr. Frank was appointed, by the court of St. Petersburg, consul-general in Italy, and a considerable salary was added to that office, with a view to indemnify him. Frank, however, refused the charge, under a pretence of too much business. The empress, therefore, who would not leave his signal services without reward, granted him considerable commercial privileges, which his vessels still enjoy in all the sea-ports of Russia.

The great trade of Leghorn to the coast of Barbary and the Levant, makes the performance of quarantine very strict. No one must expect indulgence on this head ; neither rank, nor *parole d'honneur*,
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nor the strongest tokens of good health fall into any consideration. The quarantine is performed in certain buildings erected for that purpose, and situate not far from the harbour. The time of abode differs variously, and its duration is fixed according to the place whence the ship comes, and its certificates of health. All the favour shewn on that head to count Orlow, who was forced to repeat many times the same medical process, was to let him go just a few days before his time was expired. The sailors hate those long quarantines, and practise every art to avoid them. When a ship, coming from the Levant, descries the port at a distance, all is in motion; every soul on board must clean and dress himself, and strong liquors are not spared to give the crew a brisk and jolly appearance: the sick must leave their hammocks and feign to be well; but if their disorder is suspicious, they are sometimes landed by night before the ship reaches the harbour. I remember
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that this manœuvre was practised by a man of war in 1774; she had two of her men sick, whose disease puzzled the skill of the ship's surgeons. These sailors being both Italians, and acquainted with the country, were brought on shore in the dead of night: the ship continued her course, little caring about these men, who were never heard of afterwards. A discovery might have put their life into danger, for the laws are very rigorous on that head, and this is indeed the best part of Italian policy. The smallest boat that enters a harbour, though it comes only from a shore of Italy, situate a few miles farther, is obliged to send first a declaration to the commissioners of health, before leave is granted to the crew to enter the town.

The coffee-houses in Leghorn are the finest in Europe; they abound with the most modish and exquisite ornaments, the rooms are full of large pier glasses, and

and most sumptuously illuminated at night. Hospitality, to which the people of Leghorn are as great strangers as other Italians, is fully insulted here by a very singular custom, which reflects no honour upon a rich commercial city.--- Every foreigner, who is not an Italian, must pay double price upon his entering the play-house for the first time ; should such a stranger oppose so inhospitable a regulation, the entrance is denied him ; if his language, countenance, and dress, are so much Italian that he is not known, he only pays the usual price, but in case of a discovery exposes himself to an affront. It must be observed, that this abusive custom is only peculiar to Leghorn ; and although the speculation be lucrative, no city in Italy has yet followed the example.

S E C T. VI.

GENOA.—Government.—Character of the Genoese.—State œconomy.—Commerce.—Capital funds.—Parallel between Genoa and Hamburgh.—Private Oeconomy.—Parfimony.—Sciences and arts.—Works of architecture.—Ladies.—Language.—Gross ignorance.—Acts of devotion.—Brotherhoods.—Solemnity with St. John's ashes.—Constitution.—Nobility.—Genoa emancipated by the people in 1746.—Army and navy.—Harbour.—Self-selling galley slaves.—Commercial concerns of the Genoese nobles.—Clifford.—Bank of Genoa.—Commerce oppressed.—St. Remo.—Noli.—Assemblies.—Cicisbeat.—Lucca.

THE republic of Genoa, formerly so powerful, which possessed even a suburb of Constantinople, and struck the Venetians with terror, is now fallen
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into a meanness which denotes from all quarters its want of power, and renders dubious the future length of its republican existence. It was a fatal necessity to yield Corsica to France. The troops of the republic were not sufficient to defend that island against the intrepid natives who fought against tyranny. According to the most authentic calculations, this conquest cost France 20,000 men and sixty millions of livres, and the number of inhabitants amounts to about 124,000. It might be said that the Genoese have rather won than lost by the yielding up of this island, were Corsica not highly necessary to the city of Genoa on account of the provisions: these are no more brought hither since Corsica is subject to France. If it should happen sometimes, they are sold at so high a price as the common citizen of Genoa cannot afford, this dearth, the end of which cannot be foreseen, makes the people dissatisfied with the government against which they

they murmur loudly. It is remarkable, this and many other instances, the republics of Genoa and Venice form a perfect contrast. In Venice the tongue is fettered, whilst here the people may give the freest course to complaints by the most violent expressions, without having any thing to fear from resentment. If this indulgence of a government springs from political maxims, one might almost assert the principle so detrimental to humanity, that in governing nations, violence is to be preferred to lenity. The discontent of a nation with its government creates a disinclination to the state itself, which is the case here; whereas the Venetians, notwithstanding the severity with which they are treated, are most firmly attached to their republic.

Stabbing with daggers, and sometimes murder itself, is treated with the same indulgence, as the magistrates are afraid of the same attacks. I myself heard a

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conversation between a journeyman and the general of the republic (who is always a senator, whereas in Venice it must be a foreigner and a real foldier, which forms again a contrast) in the palace of the doge. The man's brother had been taken into custody for a crime against the state, to which he pleaded not guilty; the journeyman, therefore, insisted upon his being set at liberty in the most peremptory terms, adding, that he would be revenged if his demand was not complied with. My astonishment exceeded all bounds when this insolent conduct, exhibited in a public court, and in the presence of above one hundred persons, was answered by the general with indulgence and condescension, which in similar cases are the surest token of a weak government. He made every exertion to appease the man, and revoked, on the spot, the orders he had given, that no one should be admitted to the presence of the delinquent.

There

There is an old proverb, which is continually in the mouth of the neighbours of the Genoese, "A sea without fish, " mountains without woods, men without " probity, and women without shame." It would be doing an injury to the Genoese to judge them strictly from vulgar proverbs, in which there lies sometimes a great deal of truth. They have given no small reason for it, and still continue doing it. A spirit of usury, which animates the men, makes them to permit themselves many things by which probity and credit must suffer ; it also makes them careless about their wives, to whom they grant great liberties, which they turn so well to their advantage, as in some respects makes true the above saying.

The Genoese are more cunning and industrious than other Italians. This arises from the sterility of their country, whose nature is a bastard, if compared to the other adjacent fine provinces. They
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wish to supply this defect by activity and the exerting their parts, and have always well succeeded in that particular: The same character was also common to the Ligurians, who, in times of yore, inhabited this country. Travellers in every country are taught by singular examples how conducive want is to industry, and how it is checked by abundance. Let them only compare the watery and marshy soil of Holland with the Elysian fields of Naples. This remarkable industry of the Genoese, their usury and peculiar way of thinking and acting, brought upon them not only the hatred of their neighbours, but of all Italy.

From a peculiar refinement of state œconomy, imitated partly in some places, but no where wholly, government keep to themselves the exclusive trade in all the principal articles of provisions, such as bread, wine, oil, wood; in short, all necessaries must be bought in the magazines

zines of the city, where they are found of the worst quality. Besides this, as the prices are high, and smuggling cannot easily take place, the common people are constrained to purchase their necessities there. The nobility and considerable merchants, upon paying certain duties, may receive their provisions from abroad. They are suffered to make a present of a few bottles of wine to strangers, who, without that piece of politeness, would fare very badly in Genoa, it being, at any rate, absolutely impossible to get drinkable wine. This extensive monopoly causes the extraordinary poverty which so much oppresses the common people of this city, that were it not for the great number of foundations and considerable voluntary contributions, they would almost be starved.

The population of Genoa amounts to about 80,000 souls, of which there are not above two hundred rich families, and
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five or six hundred of an ordinary competency; the rest are as poor as misery itself; the state itself is poor, and leaves no prospect of ever paying the great debts it has contracted.

People are accustomed to look upon Genoa as the Peru of Italy. The capital sums which this city has lent to kings, princes, and towns, and still does lend, seem to confirm the idea of an inexhaustible treasure. The total decay of the trade of Genoa obliged the Genoese to lend out their capital funds by change. There are no warehouses, as in other commercial cities, stocked with the productions of different countries, and the trade of Genoa is entirely in money concerns. Money, however, being no wealth with respect to state-œconomy, but only a token of wealth, ought to be looked upon here as a common article; for should it come to fail, the trade of the Genoese must cease for ever, the country being quite destitute

tute of natural productions. From this people might naturally believe, that there must be plenty of money, it being considered as the sole commodity of Genoa; but they would be mistaken, and the smallest comparison will evince it. The money circulating here does not exceed nine millions of rix-dollars, a sum which, though considerable, cannot be looked upon as extraordinary, being the only wealth of a state called rich. Hamburgh has perhaps no smaller circulation, though its true opulence does not consist so much in money than in the great variety of merchandize and all sorts of raw and wrought productions. It would not be difficult for me to prove, that this great imperial city, though only possessed of a small territory, and not looked upon as a state in the Germanic constitution, without nobles on her head to give her the conceited splendor of Genoa, is, nevertheless, of greater importance than the latter, by her more extensive commerce, her wealth diffused

among all classes of people, in short, for her industry and flourishing state. The capitals disposed of as loans to other countries, amounted in June of 1789, to forty-five millions of rix dollars, but a great part of this money is not safe. Taking now all those riches together, besides all debts paid, they would not have been sufficient to maintain only for six months the English forces during the late American war. Such calculations are sometimes necessary to ascertain the proportion of one state, with respect to another.

The great oeconomy observed by the richer sort of people, to enable them to make loans of their interest, baffles every conception, and a Dutchman would think it carried too far; hence the small degree of hospitality, the reserved course of life, the plain and simple dress, the rarity of amusements, and total want of literati
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and artists in this capital, which gave birth to a Columbus and a Doria.

Parimony alone could introduce the custom of a black dress, unparalleled in Europe. The Venetians, though they wear uniform red cloaks, make them only subservient to cover the various dresses in which they always appear in company. But in Genoa, the dress is completely black; and he that wishes to distinguish himself in the least from the populace, wears that colour, and no other. This causes so sullen an aspect in company, by which the small degree of sociableness of this state is perhaps still more lessened.

The Genoese are as fond of plays as any other race of Italians, but they are still more fond of money; therefore those splendid operas, which are acted in other smaller cities of Italy, are never seen in Genoa. The small encouragement which actors receive, supplies Ge-

Genoa only with the outcast of other cities. Should a famous singer happen to come to Genoa, it would only be in summer, when the greatest part of the Italian theatres are closed.

Genoa is the only state of some importance in Europe, which has no university. The indifference of the Genoese about arts and sciences is really incredible, and herein they form another contrast with the Venetians, who give great encouragement to some of the learned and artists. If the palaces of Durazzo, Brignole, Carrega, and others had not been filled with rare pictures in the sixteenth and seventeenth century, they surely would not be at present. These collections are not increased, nor are they properly taken care of. An artist might risk here to be starved. This also accounts for there being none to be found in Genoa. The same may be said in a double stronger meaning of the learned, especially

cially since the suppression of the order of Jesuits. Ignorance is so great in Genoa, as to be real barbarism. All this cannot be laid to the charge of the mercantile spirit, which agrees so well with an enlightened country, for it is proved by many commercial cities in Germany and France, even in Holland, where all breathes commerce; not mentioning England, where merchants are the greatest promoters of arts, and often learned men themselves.

The only art cultivated here with great success, is that of increasing capitals. The spirit of the Genoese being unruly and fermenting, would give a fatal blow to aristocratic power, if sciences could gain ground in their state. It is perhaps from a sense of conviction of this peril, that the senate set aside all the cultivation of mental accomplishments.

The fine churches and public edifices which are seen here, owe their existence to former ages, when a quite different spirit animated the state. The church of annunciation is one of the finest in Italy, and the interior parts exhibit the most uncommon splendor: the like may be said of the cathedral.

What is most striking here in point of architecture, is the bridge of Carignan, which is almost suspended in the air, and deep below it are houses six stories high. The family of Carignan had a fine church built, which still goes by their name, and makes one of the finest in Genoa. Its situation upon a mountain was very incommodious for pious souls; that family had therefore the above bridge built, which leads from the opposite mountain to the church. There is a still more beautiful prospect from a terrace, which represents to the eye, all at once, the sea, the city, and numberless

berless country feats. Antiquities and productions of statuary are very rare in Genoa, and very numerous in smaller and less important cities, as those of Parma, Placenza, Bologna, &c. If a traveller asks for master-pieces of statuary, they will show him three statues by Puget, which, though valuable, are but indifferent remains in a rich city, where the arts have been once in so flourishing a condition.

Genoa goes by the name of the *magnificent*. But it may indeed be said, that it has nothing great but its buildings, all other things evince the littleness of the state. There reigns a certain sadness amidst the splendor of palaces and temples, which give them a very melancholy appearance. To this may be added the prevailing fashion of a black dress. The neighbouring Italians used to say, that the Genoese are in mourning for their former good faith and fidelity.

It was pride, and not the love of architecture, which made the Genoese embellish their capital by sumptuous palaces, which, however captivating for cursory observation, are far remote from the good style of this art, which is admired in the palaces of Rome and Florence, and in the works of Palladio. The fine prospect of Genoa from the sea-side, of which the inhabitants are so proud, is too dearly bought by the great incommodiousness of its narrow and stinking streets, which arises from the local situation of the place. The space it occupies is a narrow track of land, between the mountains and the sea shore. It forms a semicircle round the harbour, and is so narrow, that a great part of the town is built on the declivity of the mountains, and has the appearance of an amphitheatre. Excepting a few streets passable for horses and carriages, all the others are impracticable for that purpose; even the magnificent *Brada nuova*, which consists
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of fourteen palaces, is subject to the same inconveniency, though the broadest of Genoa. The nobility therefore go a visiting in chairs, but they only suffer themselves to be carried when the weather is bad, and when fair, the chairs follow them empty from behind. The ladies have the advantage of being always attended by cavaliers. They are in a black dress like the latter, to distinguish themselves from the wives of common citizens, to whom it is not permitted to wear black, and who, I believe, would be little inclined to adopt a wear so repugnant to delicate elegance; however, all plebeians, or such as do not wish to belong to the vulgar class, go in black as well as the nobles.

The Genoese ladies are handsome, but their peculiar dress does not set off their beauty: it consists in a cotton veil, called *mesero*, with which they cover the head and upper part of the body; nothing remains free but the eyes, which

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they effect by giving a skilful turning to the veil. Head, neck, arms, shape, in short the finest parts of their body, are made invisible, and the lady is almost transmuted into a mummy. The most elegant head-dress, and the most superb attire, are sometimes concealed beneath this grotesque disguise, which is the more ridiculous, from the odd contrast the veil forms upon silk gowns. It is true that the Venetian ladies wear also a veil, called *Zendalo*, but these are of a black silk stuff, of a quite different quality, and are worn as a shawl, and bound behind in a knot, which gives them a charming appearance, whilst the *mesero* has a very disagreeable aspect. The Genoese ladies of quality never use this veil, unless they pay some very secret incognito visit. To wear jewels is forbidden by a law, which allows them only to ladies going to be married, six weeks before and six weeks after marriage.

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The total want of mental accomplishments among the men, premises, in this respect, no opportunity of a panegyric upon the fair sex. Reading being a quite unknown occupation, the ladies are not to blame if they look upon a book as the most useless thing in the world. Gaming, intrigues, and acts of devotion compose the circle of their sphere, and are their sole amusements in company. Only, from a peculiar regard for a stranger, they can be prevailed upon to speak Italian, for even ladies of the first rank, speak among themselves the Genoese only. A circumstance, which makes the ladies so partial to that dialect, that they find it difficult to converse in Italian: there are even some of the first rank who can speak no language but their own. A beautiful young lady, descended from the most illustrious blood in Genoa, was among that number in 1780. It is therefore no affront to ask a Genoese lady, whether she understands Italian? How-

ever strange it must appear, to ask an Italian woman, in the centre of Italy, whether she talks her mother tongue ?

The Genoese dialect is so much different from other Italian dialects, that a stranger, possessed of a thorough knowledge of the Italian, will be unable to make any sense of it. It proves, that vowels heapt too much together, give no good sound to a language. On the contrary, they make a displeasing impression upon the ear, and form a howling tone. The characteristic of this dialect consists in abridging the Italian word, and dropping their consonants ; thus the vowels approach too much, are heapt together, and one half of the word is swallowed ; E. gr. *Tavola*, the table, is called *toa* ; *scudo*, *scuo*, &c.

To make amends for the unspeakable ignorance, of which the Genoese are not ashamed, they esteem greatly all pious cere-

ceremonies, especially processions, in which they even exceed Rome. The number of brotherhoods is greater here than in any other city of Italy ; they distinguish themselves from each other by uniform masks, and make a frightful spectacle. Their dress is a kind of nightgown, which covers their whole body ; it consists usually of white linen, hides the head, and has but two holes left in the mask for the eyes to peep through. Many carry daggers or knives under this disguise, with which they endeavour to stab their enemy when passing alongside. Such nefarious deeds are common here, and remain usually unpunished ; the mask conceals the real assassin, and the brotherhood, instead of delivering him up to justice, grants him protection. During my abode in Genoa, a merchant of Milan was aimed at with a knife by one of these devotees, but he luckily escaped the stab, which had only grazed his skin. What gave occasion to this, is so insignificant

ficant, as to seem almost incredible. The merchant had only observed to a friend, with whom he was standing in the street to see the procession, that the dress of such a brotherhood (for on certain feasts they appear in galla, and wear small cloaths of party-coloured taffety, trimmed with fringes) did please him more than another; the villain was going to resent this innocent observation by murder. A prudent stranger should look at these kind of buffooneries at a distance; for let him be ever so accustomed to see acts of devotion in other parts of Italy, the oddity of this parade surpasses, on account of the grotesque masks, and absurd ornaments, every ridicule that can be seen.

Most of the members of this gang are common trades or journeymen. A merchant in Genoa, if ever so devout, would think himself debased to associate with them. Nevertheless some of the most noble families take upon them the office
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of cross-bearer from a sense of humility. As the crosses which are carried at the head of the procession, are very great and heavy, and require a great deal of dexterity and strength to be carried, the bearers must exercise themselves long before they can make their appearance: but they are frequently made cripples during their apprenticeships, and spend the rest of their lives as martyrs. There are, however, always crowds of candidates for this honourable post, who gladly pay the considerable expences annexed to the charge. These are to buy wax tapers, and to procure other pious commodities. The rich marquis of Spinola was also cross-bearer a few years ago, and distinguished his brotherhood by his liberality.

The greatest of all the ceremonial rites is performed to the honour of St. John, whose ashes they pretend to possess here. They are said to have already operated many miracles, and among others, saved

a ship which was upon the point of sinking in the harbour. They report that it was an English ship, and of course an heretic crew, who in their agonies implored St. John, who, to reward their unexpected confidence, saved them from this imminent danger. In order to transmit this event to future ages, the whole town is in motion on the annual day of that miracle, which happened in April. The senate, the clergy, and brotherhoods, accompany the ashes, which are carried by noblemen in a silver shrine to the sea side, where mass is celebrated in a magnificent tent, during which all the bells are ringing, and frequent salutes thundering from the cannons. It is remarkable, that in Venice policy is the guide of all solemnities, but in Genoa its motive is devotion. These pious exercises might be deemed the finest policy to entertain the people, were it not evident that policy is not to be sought here.

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The particular constitution of Genoa is known. The doge, immediately after his election, becomes a state prisoner, and dares not pass beyond the walls of the city. This law, and the honour shewn to those chiefs, caused the famous answer of the doge, who was sent to France to petition Lewis XIV. Upon being asked, what did please him most in Paris? he replied, *C'est de m'y voir*. There was formerly a crown annexed to the dignity of a doge, but now he only wears a cap. Every two years another is elected; and the former leaves his throne, and takes again his chair in the senate. Every public respect is shewn to those who have been invested with that honour, in permitting them to add the title of doge to their name.

Genoa and Venice are called republics, because some hundreds of citizens have a right to tyrannize over all the rest, to make laws at their pleasure, to abolish them,

them, to invest with dignities and posts of honour, and to make such use of the revenues as they think proper. The name of republic is a bitter lampoon to deride the fervileness of these people. The motto of freedom belongs only to that nation which either governs itself, or lets govern such to whom it delegates its power: then only it is free, when it has a share in the government.

The old nobility contend for precedence with the new, which creates quarrels and factions, wherein the other classes of people take also concern. These variances, the monopolies of the government, and the rude ignorance of the middling and lower classes of people, protect the aristocratic power of the senate, and cement the sway of slavery.

The particular way of thinking and acting of the Genoese makes them hated by all other Italians. This national odium
creates

creates contempt at the neighbouring courts, who make use of every opportunity to humble them. It is still more unlucky for them, that their princely neighbours are good œconomists, who want no loans, and of course are not obliged to shew them any political indulgence. A great monarch,* who despised them uncommonly, gave them a clear proof of it. When he was travelling all over Italy, he would not honour Genoa with his presence, though he was more than once near it, and visited almost every great city, above all the sea-ports. There is a report, which, whether true or false, is very popular in Genoa, that this monarch answered to the deputies of the senate who came to welcome him, that the number of his attendants was too *little* to appear in their town.

* Joseph II. the late emperor.

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Here the reader will recollect the emancipation of this city by the mob in 1746, and its peculiar consequences, of which Genoese are not little proud. Indeed neither ancient nor modern history furnish us an example of a well-disciplined army of a warlike nation being overcome by the mob, and driven from the conquered city. The fact would appear incredible, had it not happened in our own times. It would, however, be unjust to lay the blame upon the Imperial troops; they made a most gallant defence in their perilous situation, and fell victims to the inexperience of their general, the marquis de Botta. This man, void of all abilities, having driven the Genoese to despair by his hard and senseless conduct, was quite incapable to take proper measures at that critical period. The people had assembled in crowds in all the houses, palaces, and convents of Strada Balbi (where the Imperialists had their head quarters) and in all the places which were ad-

adjacent to that street. The continual fire, which came from the windows and roofs of these solid buildings, did dreadful execution among the troops, whose fire was without effect. The amphitheatrical situation of the city gave uncommon advantages to the enraged mob. All the stones and balls that came from above did mischief, and the constancy of the troops in facing those dangers helped only to shed more of their blood; finally, they found no other safety than in a precipitate retreat. This bold enterprize was the work of the lowest order of plebeians. The rest of the inhabitants, even the senate, who looked with great uncertainty upon the success of the event, would not take any active part, and contented themselves by furnishing the mob with arms and secret maintenance. Thus, through the incapacity of a single man, the Imperialists lost an important country, and the marquis, instead of being punished, was invested with new dignities; a proof

of his being a better courtier than a general. Had he lived in the reign of Joseph, his treatment would probably have been quite different.

Genoa has since been encompassed with new fortifications; but they are so extensive as to want 30,000 men to defend them. Should the town get no relief, in case of a siege, by foreign auxiliaries, the fortifications would be of no service. The standing army of the Genoese amounts, in all, to three thousand men; most of them are Germans, both officers and privates, ill disciplined, ill clothed, and ill esteemed. The general is always one of the first members of the senate; he never wears an uniform, but holds a reed cane in his hand, as a token of his dignity. The state keeps only four galleys; they are mostly used to conduct the senators to those towns of their territory which lay on the sea coast, and to bring the Genoese ladies to the
baths

baths situate near Pisa. This is the destination of the naval forces of Genoa. They seldom cruize against pirates.

The port of Genoa is fine; and vessels lay safe in it against winds and tempests; nevertheless it would not be difficult for an experienced commander to penetrate into it with a fleet. The march of troops to Genoa would be impossible by land, if the king of Sardinia did choose to obstruct the passes. When Don Philip marched his army from Nizza to Genoa, during the Austrian succession war, he was forced to keep so near the coast, that the English ships might have rendered the road impracticable. The path is so narrow, that two horsemen cannot ride beside each other, and the passes are so rude and dangerous, that the cavalry were obliged to lead their horses by the bridle.

The negligence of the Genoese in cruising against the pirates, and the extreme

treme weakness of the government, furnish not slaves enough to man their small number of galleys; a circumstance the more surprising, as theft and assassination are frequently committed, and the galleys do supply the place of houses of correction.

This want of objects of correction is nevertheless made up in a manner above the reach of human conception, and which, I think, is practised in no corner of the globe than here. One should believe that the most abject degree of human misery is the life of a galley-slave. To be fettered to the deck, with no other cover than the sky, exposed to all the caprices of the seasons and the impetuosity of the sea, the most miserable diet, eaten up by vermin, lacerated with lashes, it should seem those wretches would envy the fate of the prisoner, who lies in chains in a subterraneous dungeon; for his situation, compared to theirs, is happy: yet, from an unaccountable

countable contradiction in human nature, there are men here who sell their liberty to make up the deficiency of galley slaves. The term of slavery is usually a twelve-month, and the price two zechins, which the unnatural wretch spends immediately in liquors. He is afterwards undrest and chained to the galley. No difference is made between the greatest criminals and such a fellow. In the course of the year he may feel an inclination to farther extravagance, when money is given him, and his term prolonged. It is, therefore, rarely that such base creatures re-obtain their liberty.

The condition of the Italian galley slaves is, in general, shocking to humanity. They get never dry at sea, every surge breaks in upon them, and dashes their bodies with such violence against certain parts of the galley, as to break frequently their arms and legs. They must, once or twice a week, bathe and

clean themselves in the sea, yet they are almost devoured by vermin, and the ship stinks like an hospital. They are always merry, sing and swear among themselves, and get drunk as often as they find an opportunity. If somebody goes to see them without giving something, they infect the curious visitor with lice in a most masterly manner. The way of living of these slaves is much like that upon the galleys of Malta and Ragusa.

The Genoese nobles have not renounced commerce, but practise that occupation so useful to the interest of a state with unabated zeal. The two greatest mercantile houses belong to the noble families of Durazzo and Cambiasi; they are not ashamed to come upon change, and to flatter the lowest class of merchants upon occasion. They are all politeness and condescension *al banco*. Woe to the merchant, who builds upon this a system of protection! For
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the same man who shook hands with him so cordially upon change, will talk as a despot, if he waits upon him at his palace. Mr. Clifford, that once so eminent merchant at Amsterdam, had a proof of this in the days of his highest prosperity, whilst he was even caressed by princes. He past through Genoa, and intended to pay a visit to the noble Durazzo, the head of the most eminent commercial house in Genoa. Accustomed to find all the doors of the great open at the very uttering of his name, he was astonished to see himself neglected in the antichamber of a nobleman without title and dignity. He looked upon it as a mistake in the servant who went in to mention his name: he sent several messages, that Mr. Clifford of Amsterdam was waiting; but nobody appeared. After having staid in vain for a whole hour, he went away, and gave the valet the following message: "Tell your master that the Cliffords are not used

“to drudge in an antichamber, and
“that the Durazzos are too little to ex-
“pect such an honour.”

The bank of Genoa, which is consecrated to St. George, represents a singular political phenomenon. It is quite independent from the senate and the legislative power, and makes, therefore, a kind of state of its own, which has its own laws, and is often at variance with the government, yet this without has no bad consequences. The senate has never yet seized this treasure, but has added to it a great part of the revenues. The bank, erected in the fifteenth century, has preserved its laws without any alteration. Its administration is in the hand of the richest of the citizens, who are chosen governors for life. It is a bulwark against the abuse of aristocratic power.

As the noblest and richest members of the senate are merchants, or have money

concerns with the latter, the mean policy of the government ceases to be a mystery : it consists in taking care to keep under the yoke those Genoese subjects who live upon the coast. Hence they have rendered difficult every access to the maritime places by land, and hindered the commerce of their inhabitants, in order that the capital may not suffer by it. Even Savonna, the greatest city of the republic after Genoa, groans under that oppression : it formerly had a fine harbour, which the jealousy of the Genoese has mostly destroyed. The little republic of St. Remo has also the misfortune to be subject to Genoa ; it enjoyed considerable privileges till 1753, when it strenuously opposed an impost upon salt. Its resistance was vain without foreign aid, for the city was brought under obedience and stripped of all privileges. The Genoese have erected a fort, to keep it under their yoke, and put in it a garrison of several hundred soldiers. The inhabi-

tants of Noli are the happiest of all Genoese subjects; they form a little republic of fishermen, and enjoy considerable privileges, for the preservation of which they take the most anxious care.

The affairs of government and commerce, and the climate itself, have introduced the custom among the Genoese, to chuse the evening for keeping and assembling company. This custom prevails throughout Italy, with that difference, that here all the nobility assemble only in one house. Thus it goes by turns to all families, so that fourteen or fifteen months elapse before it comes round. These evening assemblies are called *conversazioni*, they begin at nine and last till eleven; the company play and receive refreshments, if asked for, and thus endeth the conversation. Nothing is more absurd in the eyes of a stranger, who is not fond of gaming, than these assemblies: as they only meet for that purpose, and the time
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is short, there is not a minute lost. They come, play, and haste away. Every body is drest in black as usual. The abundant use of china is limited by law ; but silver plate may be purchased at discretion. The cicisbeat, a custom observed all over Italy, is no where carried to a more ridiculous and extravagant degree than in Genoa. With the day of the nuptials ceases every public intercourse between husband and wife ; they even must not be seen together, neither walking, nor at the playhouse, nor in company ; in short, no where but at home. In other cities many a husband puts himself above that foolish usage, out of love to his spouse, and has nothing else to fear, than to be looked upon as an unfashionable, jealous husband ; but here the most united couple must not think of such a thing. To be forsaken by all friends, derided by enemies, insulted by the mob, are unavoidable consequences, if they are ever seen together in public. They are abhorred as

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people.

people infected by the plague, and even bosom friends avoid to meet them and hide themselves. The latter would be laughed at, were they publicly to converse with persons thus remarked.

How pernicious to morals this senseless habit must be in a voluptuous country, every one that knows mankind must allow, notwithstanding the favourable light in which it has been presented even by eminent travellers, who became in this point the echo of the Italians. There is nothing ridiculous on earth, but may be depicted in pleasing colours. Enough, the lady chooses her *cicisbeo*, who is often mentioned in the contract of marriage, and it is he who becomes her inseparable companion; she is quite his own, except at night, when the husband displaces him, though only for a few hours. A *cicisbeo* who has a mind to do his duty properly, visits his lady in bed in the morning, and helps her to dress and undress

undress herself, the husband goes away, &c. It is a prejudice to look upon the Italians as jealous. It is fully proved, with regard to their wives, that they are little troubled with that passion: but in courtship and other amours, they manifest their jealousy. I do not mean to say that, in the latter case, it is stronger among them than among other nations; yet it is more vehement, and this from a hot and revengeful temper, which frequently cannot be allayed by any thing less than assassination and death.

The origin of this singular custom, must be considered to flow from a different source, they, having been formerly so much reproached with jealousy, wished to get rid of that censure, and so doing, fell by degrees into another extremity.

Whilst the moral disadvantage of the *cicisbeat* comes under no consideration

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among the easy manners of our age, the physical and political disadvantage of the state is, however, extraordinary in Genoa, the following instance will prove it. Here are merchants of all nations, especially Germans, English, and French; the latter, however, do not come from France, but from those parts of Switzerland where French is spoken. In 1780 there was not a single Frenchman settled in Genoa as a merchant; a circumstance the more remarkable, as there is no commercial city in Europe without French houses. These foreigners in Genoa are usually eminent merchants; but every one, of what nation soever, lives in the state of celibacy. However detrimental the principle of an unmarried life, adopted by such a number of opulent people, must be to a state even with regard to population, it is nevertheless the least evil in Genoa. No foreigner settles but with a firm intent to stay for a fixed number of years, and then to go where he pleases. A man cannot leave

leave this city without growing rich, if he possesses all requisite commercial knowledge, has no family, and observes great parsimony. Thus at the expiration of a limited space of time, if death does not intervene, every foreign merchant leaves Genoa with his riches—an infinite disadvantage for a state! A rich merchant, a native of Geneva, who had settled in Genoa a few years ago, took the resolution to marry, and to live according to his liking, in spite of the *cicisbeat*; he therefore chose a charming woman from his own country, whose possession was to compensate for every thing else. Parted from all the world, happy with one another, they endured it for a while, and lived like two anchorets in a populous city. But the vexation to be excluded, like dishonest people, from all companies, walks, plays, &c. to which they could not resort under such a predicament, without being insulted, had such an effect upon them, that they both became sick. Death

put shortly a period to the existence of the fretting fair, and left it to her tender spouse to bewail a misfortune, of which he was the sole author, and which he might well have foreseen.

L U C C A.

THE republic of Lucca represents the picture of a commonwealth very different from that of Genoa. There is more equality among its citizens, and a kind of liberty which would be sought in vain all over Italy. This little state, which is far inferior to many large Imperial towns, preserves itself through its littleness and poverty, and enjoys undisturbed happiness. Liberty has generated among the inhabitants a kind of industry, which is exerted to the highest degree both in town and in the country. The fields are well cultivated, and the town people employ their time in the business of

of manufactures : they especially make a vast quantity of masks, and with so much art, that no country can rival the people of Lucca ; this commodity, therefore, makes a lucrative branch of trade in a country where carnivals are objects of such importance. No Jews are tolerated. It is also remarkable, that the natives of Lucca would never receive the Jesuits, even at a time when that order governed one half of Europe. It is a great question, whether under the banners of St. Ignace,* the industry and reputation of a little state would have characterised them till now.

* St. Ignace, the founder of the Jesuitic order.

SECT.

S E C T. VII.

Character of the modern Romans.—Pride.—Religion of the Priests.—Toleration.—Sociableness.—Fondness of politics.—Cardinal de Bernis and the duke de Grimaldi.—The fish of litigiousness.—Stabbing with knives.—Protestants.—Paper money.—Beggars.—Portioning of poor girls.—Manners of the ladies.—Visiting of churches.—Vast pilgrim hospital.—College for the propagation of the faith (de propaganda fide).—Sanskrit language.—German seminary at Rome.

ROME is the most magnificent city in Europe, and none can be compared to it: besides, it is the principal city in the world for the artist, for the lover of arts, for the antiquarian, in short, for every thinking individual, of whatever nation or religion. Although
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magnificent in its vast ruins, in its churches, palaces, water-spouts, public statues, pillars, and obelisks; yet all those wonders of art do not form a rapturing *tout ensemble*. Rome is admirable only in part. Several of the most splendid edifices stand in corners, where they can have no effect, and are, above all, surrounded by mean objects. The Pantheon, for instance, stands upon a little spot where the women roast fishes all day long, and sell other provisions. The great place, called Navonna, which has the finest fountain in Italy, is mostly beset with indifferent houses, and serves the purpose of a rag fair. The splendid fountain of Trevi, with its opera scenes, lies quite concealed. The admirable stairs of *Trinita di Monte* are degraded by a mean church, to which they lead. The great church of Laterano, of which the pope himself is rector, is situate in the fields. Even St. Peter's has very bad avenues before one comes to the colonnade.

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By an astonishing change of things we find among the posterity of the most famous, valiant, and freest people of the antique world, obscurity, cowardice, and slavery united in the highest degree; nor is there a trace left among them of the heroic character of the Romans. The moderns, who usurp that name, have preserved nothing but their pride, which they manifest in various ways, however little it becomes them: neither do they omit to put every where that splendid sentence, which we find upon the monuments of antiquity: *Senatus Populusque Romanus*, nor care they how ridiculous it may sound.

This pride of the Romans of our times, which they shew in spite of their poverty, ignorance, and many other defects, must indeed excite pity; it has no other foundation but the great name of the ancient inhabitants, and the great number of works of art, whose masters are dead so long

long ago. Yet this pride is peculiar to labourers as well as to princes in every thing, even in their manner of expressing themselves. A small house, whose proprietor enjoys a small rank, goes directly by the name of *palazzo* (palace). Out of vanity they assume the names of celebrated heroes, and the considerable families of modern Rome have plenty of Cæsars and Scipios. To send a common fellow with a message is called *ambasciata* (embassy). A prince, though his revenues do not amount to 4000 scudi, talks of his *corte* (court)—The cook of the man of quality takes the high title of *Ministro della cucina*, and every menial servant styles himself *della famiglia* (of the family) of prince or cardinal N. N.

The nobility use to display their pomp by the great number of these creatures, whom they retain in their service; but this pomp is only apparent, as their wages are very small, and they must live upon
begging,

begging, a sort of gratuity, called *mancia*. This shameful custom is carried here to the highest degree of extravagance. If you have dined with some great man, or only had an audience of him, his servants come the day following to your lodgings to demand their *mancia*, which must be given in proportion to the nature of your concern with their master. He who pretends to no farther audience, or is content with what he has had, and of course refuses to give a salary, must expect the grossest insolence, because they insist upon it as a duty.—This barbarous custom is so common here, that the very servants of the pope follow it. Some maintain that many cardinals have a share in the *mancias* of their servants, which, in the course of a twelvemonth, amount to a considerable sum. Pride, however great among cardinals, gives often way to the love of money. These men think themselves equal to kings in point of rank, and superior to electors, only because

cause the pope is chosen from among their body ; and as they suppose the pope is above the emperor, they likewise will have themselves above the princes who elect the emperor. In consequence of that conceited ridiculous notion, a cardinal, who had, a few years ago, a message and concern at the court of an elector, set aside all ceremonies, and came to court without being introduced. Not only a cold, but rather contemptible dismissal, taught the proud priest the great and essential difference between him and a reigning elector.

This Roman pride lasts in spite of the humiliations which the papal see must receive at present from all sides, and the accidents which it still must expect : it is so obstinate a pride as certainly deserves not the name of policy. It is well known, that the popes refuse, to this very day, the title of King to protestant monarchs. When the death of Frederic,
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the great king of Prussia, was announced in the Roman gazette, it mentioned that *il soverano di Prussia* was dead. Speaking of the grand signior, they do not call him sultan, but *il tiranno*.

It is natural that this pride, which prevails among all classes of people, must promote luxury, notwithstanding their extreme poverty. On feast and other solemn days, the wenches of the meanest plebeian rival ladies of the first rank in point of dress. It alone makes the chief object of their care, even should they be obliged to live all the while upon fruits and vegetables. Often such a donna, who struts in silk gowns, has but a single shift, which she washes, wrapping herself up in rags, as the warmth of the climate makes it soon dry: at night they all sleep stark naked. Many women, whose husbands have very insignificant places, must have a servant in livery behind them on feast days, when they go
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to mafs; for this purpose they hire a labourer, who takes the office upon him for about fixpence. He puts on his universal livery, and walks respectfully behind the signora. In any other place this would excite laughter; but here it creates more esteem, even among perfons who are acquainted with thofe ladies, and are fully informed of the fixpenny contract.

This universal pride ftifles an alacrity, which fprings only from a free manner of living, from which the inhabitants of Rome are fo far diftant. All fpiritual and fecular offices are in the hands of priests, who are poffeffed of almoft every thing that conveys dignity and importance. This is a greater inducement to indolence and indigence, two common epithets of the Italians, who wifh nothing more than to be without work; hence thoufands of the inhabitants of Rome place their whole dependance upon the mendicated bits, which are daily diftributed

buted in immense quantities before the convents : this circumstance makes the mob not a little attached to the system of their religion and the monastic orders.

No place in the world exhibits a greater image of sadness than Rome, where splendor and dissimulation have fixed their empire. To the above mentioned causes may be added the fatal firocco wind, which, while it blows, has an astonishing effect upon people, and depresses them both in body and mind : to this comes the want of public amusements, the numberless cohorts of priests, and the favourite black dress. Rome is full of menial employ, as every cardinal keeps his own court. As the art of dissimulation belongs to court manners, it may easily be guessed how much it prevails in this holy city. Ambition is the chief altar upon which the saint college bring their offerings ; it was the basis of the see of Rome, and the priests have remained faithful
to

to that system for many ages. The Capitol was changed, but the Vatican has never undergone any change. Yet we owe to Rome, that in the barbarous ages the holy fire of sciences did not wholly become extinct upon earth.

Many are of opinion that the great in Rome are very irreligious, though they do not externally neglect the rites of the church. This, however, is an error, and I am convinced, that the Romans, of whatever rank or condition, are as credulous here as in any city in Christendom, though they show less zeal in their religious ceremonies than other nations; a subject, on which I shall treat hereafter. It would be wronging the governors of this city to look upon the modern miracles, relics, and other things of that kind, as priestcrafts, used to deceive the people. It is beyond doubt, that simplicity and superstition first formed those miraculous ideas, which were afterwards brought into
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a system by deeply-meditating priests, and, by them, so much embodied with religion, that every zealous catholic looked upon them as an article of faith. This is even the case now with almost every great prelate or cardinal that composes the court of Rome: many of them are most zealous, not only with regard to the preservation of papal authority, from which their own depends, but even in point of other matters.

Nevertheless, the Romans look upon themselves as very tolerant, and grant a great deal of indulgence, especially to strangers; even studied offences, in respect to religion, are very rarely punished; and if the offender be a stranger, they usually give him time to make his escape. This indulgence is often abused, but highly necessary to so poor a city as Rome, where the whole machine of subsistence turns upon the axis of foreign visitors. The most insignificant recommendation is sufficient here for a stranger to introduce him
into

into the greatest houses. For half arix-dollar, or less, every palace, gallery, or villa in Rome stands open to him, yet it is certain that pride has a great share in it; for what can be more flattering to the proprietor than the loud admiration of his treasures streaming from every lip and echoed in every descriptive tour?

A condescending politeness is otherwise no characteristic trait of the Roman nobility, who are rather more proud than haughty. As almost all great families reckon popes among their relations, and those *governors of Christ* put themselves above monarchs, the Roman princes presume to arrogate to themselves a similar precedence before royal princes or the sons of kings: to this must be added the grandeur and magnificence of their palaces, the great number of productions of art in their galleries, and certain prerogatives which they have in the city of Rome. The free admission they give to foreigners in their palaces, is

nothing else than a permission to appear in what they call *conversazioni* (conversations), which are tedious beyond description; there you may play, chat, and perish with thirst, however necessary a want it be to quench it in so hot a climate. In some few houses refreshments are given, in others the *conversazione*-guests get nothing, even not so much as a tumbler of water; which, if it happens, is owing to the complaisance of a servant, who remembers the *mancia* he has received. Common invitations to table are very rare, because the Romans, like other Italians, do not practise much hospitality, though an example is set them by the ministers of foreign courts. Cardinal de Bernis, the French ambassador, is remarkably hospitable: every Friday his table is beset with artists, and every other day with strangers: his house and furniture are most magnificent, and he himself is highly esteemed. He made the English always very welcome, even during the American war,

war, and if they would not come by themselves, they received no invitation, but were requested in an engaging manner by his agents. The income of this cardinal amounts to 450,000 livres; his ecclesiastical emoluments make up the greatest part of this sum, viz. 300,000.*

Though the influence of the court of Rome into the affairs of Europe has ceased long ago, yet no where people are more attentive to political events than here. Politics are the topic in all companies. However inconceivable it may appear, the Romans shewed more concern at the war between England and France, than the people in Paris. It is remarkable, that the Italians are in general very fond of the English, notwithstanding the great distance which religion and other

* This book was written before the revolution, viz. in 1787, consequently, the cardinal's revenues must have considerably decreased, the more so by late accounts.

matters have put between the two nations.

France and Spain have now ambassadors at Rome, who formerly governed both these great empires in the capacity of statesmen ; the first is cardinal Bernis, and the second the duke de Grimaldi. The end of the war united their interests and promoted their friendship ; but the latter was dissolved by a fish whilst I was at Rome : that circumstance, which exposed both premiers in a very indifferent light, furnished the populace with matter of merriment : it was a fish of uncommon size, brought to market by a countryman ; at that time great feasts were given to the arch-duke Ferdinand, and the price of the fish was put as high as twenty zechins. The cook of the Spanish ambassador was scrupulous to pay so much money, and of course would not strike bargain, but went home to advise about it with the duke's steward. The cook of
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the cardinal took the opportunity of this absence, and ordered the fish to be brought to the French ambassador's palace; he received thirty-five zechins for it, without being asked the price, in order to heighten the feast by the rumour of the expence. The duke insisted upon having the fish, but his demands were fruitless: the possession of the apple of Paris could not have been wished for with more eagerness. Cardinal Bernis had, however, the honour to have it served up, and a dish was made for it on purpose, though lost by it the friendship of duke Grimaldi.

The stabbing with knives is a thing which belongs to the customs of the Italians; but they are now less frequent in Tuscany and the territory of the pope, than in Genoa, Naples, and Sicily. These murderous habits are at present much hemmed in Rome by Spinelli, the present governor of the city. The sbirrs go upon

patrole as soon as it grows dark, and are empowered to search the pockets of every common inhabitant whom they meet with in the streets: if a knife is found upon him, the sentence of going to the gallies is unavoidable, should even his condition and character put him above every suspicion of this kind. This measure is absolutely necessary, for it is no little trick to an Italian to lay in wait for his enemy, and stab him secretly. Their sophistical arguments to palliate that diabolical crime are very singular: they compare the deed with a duel, and say, that as soon as an offence is given, the conceited duel takes an immediate beginning, and that it is necessary, from the very moment, to be upon one's guard not to be stabbed; that the stabs being either given from behind, against which a man may take care, or in front, which may be parried, it wants the same precautions as a duel upon the sword. The great number of churches, and their pri-

privileges, protect otherwise these murders, which, were it not for the inexorable rigour of Spinelli, would be more numerous here than anywhere else. They say, that since the reign of Sixtus V. there has never been such a police in Rome than that under the present governor. However the thresholds of the churches are beset with the criminals, who make them their abode, and stay there whole weeks, or whole months, until they find an opportunity to tire the vigilance of those that secretly watch them to make their escape from the city. These refugees shelter themselves against sun and rain by spreading cloths. Such a spectacle affects an observing traveller, and creates the most indignant opinion of the legislature of the country, which all the pleasingness of the arts cannot efface. Twenty years ago the celebrated Smollet saw a fellow, who had murdered his pregnant wife, walking in a most unconcerned manner before a church in Florence.

It is however remarkable, that these murders are never grounded upon spites of religion, notwithstanding the great number of strangers of different religions resident in Rome. The spirit of making converts is also very imperceptible here, though they receive with joy such proselytes as wish to change religion, and, according to the case, grant them sometimes a small pension, for which purpose there are several beneficent funds.

The protestants are buried near the pyramid of Cestus, a place much like a church-yard: it contains numbers of tomb-stones and epitaphs. The funerals are usually performed late in the evening, and, at desire, accompanied by sbirrs. This precaution is necessary, because the esteem which the people of Rome have for strangers who are not of their religion, ceases with their death, and when their bodies are carrying to the grave, you will often hear resound, *Al fume! al fume!*

fume! To the river! to the river! an experiment which would surely be made, did not the sbirrs keep the people in awe. It is false that the patient, upon his death-bed, is plagued by confessors; an inquiry is only made of those who are about the dying person, and upon a polite excuse, no farther application is made. This was also the case, during my stay in Rome; with a deceased hopeful draughtsman, the son of the great Bach, the famous musician, of Hamburgh. After the formal offer had been made, they suffered him to depart in peace, and his German countrymen, under a proper escort, attended him to the grave.

He that wishes to acquire a clear notion of the bad consequences of the too great abundance of paper-money in an ill-governed state, ought to go to Rome; there is nothing but bank notes, which are no small increase of great poverty: they are issued from the *Monte de Pieta*,

where paper, according to regulation, is always to be solvable, but they seldom pay more than five per cent. in real cash, and for the remainder a fresh note is given. All payments are made in that manner, and even strangers receive no other specie for their bills of exchange. To render the inconvenience still greater, it is forbidden, under a great penalty, to discount notes with allowance of discount: in short, this bank forms a perfect contrast with that of London. With it the Lombard is connected, where, for the benefit of the poor, they lend up to ten scudi upon pledges without requiring interest. This institution deserves the best encomium and universal imitation. Every sum exceeding ten scudi pays interest.

Notwithstanding this benefit, the Lombard is little troubled by the poor, who had rather feed upon mendicated soups, which they need not always fetch themselves, they being sent to the houses of
many

many families. But this sending of soups to the houses is a favour not easily granted, as the pretended monastic beneficence would then be less visible.

Rome may be called the real paradise of beggars, as they not only get subsistence from so many convents and foundations, but also ready cash distributed among them: they have, besides this, the freedom to go a begging in coffee-houses, and other places of public resort. When they have received a charity, they sometimes call for ices in the same house, and set down with genteel people; which, out of christian tenderness, is not taken amiss. There are also very good foundations to portion poor girls. A girl may sue for them without having a husband; if her request is countenanced, she receives only a written assurance of thirty, forty, or fifty scudi, but the money is paid only the day after her marriage. If the girls remain unmarried, they do not enjoy, pro-

perly speaking, that benefit, but sometimes obtain leave to sell their assurance, upon which a great discount must be allowed. These assurances, if they will take pains to apply to the several places of foundations, may be obtained in great numbers, and all at the same time; they then publish the amount, which frequently makes a handsome portion. But these good actions are performed with a show, which takes off a great deal of their merit. All the girls who have been thus portioned, must on a certain day, and in a peculiar dress, form a procession, in order to shew their obligation before the eyes of every body. This public boast of private beneficence hinders many families who are fond of their honour, from partaking of it; and by this many a good girl is debarred from having a husband.

Notwithstanding the fondness of amorous intrigues, so prevailing among the
Italian

Italian ladies, this favourite passion of theirs is treated in a methodical manner only in Rome. How would it be possible to procure husbands to such an immense number of poor girls, in a city which abounds with unmarried inhabitants, were not all the powers of art and stratagem exerted? Many foreign artists have fallen into these snares, and got a wife against every expectation. Accidents of this nature happen daily: parents permit their daughters to look all day out of the window; and whilst in other countries love-affairs are carefully concealed from the mothers, these become, in Rome, the confidants of their daughters, and assist them with their advice ripened by experience. When the girl, looking out of the window in her fine dress, makes an impression upon a man passing by, and he wishes for her acquaintance, he may know whether his wishes will be granted, by staring in the girl's face, and greeting her at some distance at the corner of another

ther street, in order that the neighbours may take no notice of it: if she does not thank him, he has no hopes; but if the compliment is returned, it is a good sign, and he may boldly venture a letter. Time and place are appointed for a conversation, and though the lover be unable to support himself, and still less a wife; or his rank be above every thought of such an alliance, yet the beggar girl will plainly ask him, "Will you marry me?" If the gallant finds the proposal against his liking, the girl, in concert with her mother, tries every art possible, and often the two lovers are surprized, by the parents and other witnesses, in a posture which is not equivocal; then the dupe has no other choice, than to pay a large sum of money fixed by law, or to embrace matrimony, or go to the gallies,

In Rome, as well as in other cities of Italy, there are churches chiefly frequented by the ladies, whence it follows that

that a great number of men resort to them. The masses which are said there to edify the fair sex, are always the last on Sundays and feasts; they begin a little before twelve, in order to give the dear creatures time to dress and to write love-billets, which they change in church for those of their gallants: this being often the only place where two lovers may meet, they endeavour to make the best of it they can. A pious act, still better, and more convenient for an amorous couple, is the holy benediction, which, in certain churches, is given at night, with an illumination of tapers and lamps; the prayers are short, and music fills the long pauses. To these charming delights may be added the prudent choice of tune, which is so appointed by the crafty priests, that after the benediction the devout tribe may go strait to the opera, the *pollicinello*, or the conversations.

The

The extreme poverty which reigns in Rome, rendered necessary a great number of hospitals, endowed with the richest foundations; but these foundations of christian beneficence were made in times, when poverty did not belong to the characteristic of the holy city. The most remarkable among these is the vast hospital for pilgrims, unparalleled in Europe. Here all catholic pilgrims are kept during three days; on the first night their feet are washed in presence of a surgeon, who must dress their wounds, if they received any in consequence of their pilgrimage. In the year of the jubilee, sometimes ten thousand pilgrims come in one day. The tables are strewed with flowers, and abundantly loaded with all necessaries; the cleanliness observed is so great, that each pilgrim receives a clean napkin at his meal, and is served by genteel people, sometimes by persons of the first rank. The tables, as well as the chambers of the women, are separated from those of the

2 men.

men. Often those female pilgrims have very worldly intentions in their wanderings. I have seen some in 1775 so smartly drest as if they were going to a ball: if their person be graceful, they are sure of obtaining their wishes. They usually travel by little journies, begging everywhere from a sense of humility; and for this reason they are much esteemed. I once met with such a donna upon the highway near Viterbo, she was doing the business of the toilet behind a bush, in order to make a decent appearance in town. A few hours after I saw her again, elegantly drest, going from coffee-house to coffee-house to beg alms; she received a great deal, but, upon leaving the houses, distributed it immediately to the poor, who surrounded her in great crowds. Her appearance engaged several gentlemen, and this was enough to procure her some desired rendezvous.

The

The Roman pilgrim hospital, which leaves no want to the body, is equally well provided with regard to spiritual matters. Twelve priests are appointed to pray, at morning and night, with the pilgrims, to instruct them in their duties, to administer the sacrament, and to bless their meals. To the benefit of this hospital are also entitled the new-recovered from every hospital in Rome, who are well treated for three days. Every Saturday night a sermon is preached to the jews in the oratory belonging to the hospital. These wretched people are forced to send their children thither, whose making wry faces, during the controversial sermon, affords a peculiar spectacle. The reluctance of this auditory of infidels may be easily conceived. The annual salary of the priest who preaches to the jews is fifty Roman scudi, which cannot be worse bestowed.

The

The number of useless foundations is very great, and being taken all together, they require enormous sums. I am sorry to reckon the college for the propagation of the faith (*de propagandâ fide*) among them. The valuable press which belongs to it, and which is unique in its kind, is furnished with letters and all proper materials to print books in twenty-eight different languages, among them is the most difficult *sanscrit* language; yet it can hardly be said, that either the church of Rome, or religion at large, and less still the sciences, have any ways been benefited by this extraordinary establishment: the whole is but a vain show; to which the Italians are so partial, and which serves to blind the ignorant.

The *sanscrit* has been attended with a vast deal of expence, yet it is not very probable that this or the next generation will see a book printed in that language at Rome. It has sixteen vowels, thirty-

thirty-four consonants, and surpasses by far the Arabic, both in regularity and grammatical order; it bears also distinctive marks of having been founded upon sound rudiments, by a society of literati, who studied its regularity, harmony, wonderful simplicity, and pathos. Whether it has been the common language of Hindostan at any period of antiquity, or whether it was invented by the Bramins to preserve therein their religion and philosophy, is a question difficult to be determined. All other tongues are accidental inventions of men to express their notions and wants; but the admirable formation of the *sanscritta* seems to be above the power of accident. The documents contained in that peculiar language, consist of elucidations with regard to the western parts of Asia, and these are much different from all those handed down to posterity by any former race of Arabians. It is also more than probable, that the former, upon strict inquiry, have
left